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Ray Snoddy
on News at Ten
PLUS
Bland on Birt

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layering

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TOMORROW

THE
TOP
100
WINES
MAGAZINE

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

SPECIAL ROYAL
COMMEMORATIVE
ISSUE: WEEKEND

UN pulls out inspection team

'Invincible' is prepared for Gulf action

By MICHAEL EVANS AND MICHAEL BINYON

BRITAIN was preparing last night to send a potent strike force to the Gulf to support the Americans in any military action against Iraq.

The aircraft carrier HMS *Invincible*, armed with six Sea Harriers, was ordered to steam from Barbados to Gibraltar and prepare to take on board six RAF Harrier GR7s.

The announcement of a British naval deployment came after the summary expulsion of six American United Nations weapons inspectors from Baghdad and the UN's resultant decision to withdraw almost the entire inspection team.

HMS *Invincible* will reach Gibraltar by Wednesday, accompanied by a tanker. If the Government decides to deploy the RAF Harriers, they will join the ship in Gibraltar. These are more powerful and have a longer range than the Sea Harriers. They carry laser-guided bombs and are capable of low-level attacks at night. A decision to send them is expected this weekend.

It would be the first time since the Second World War that a Royal Navy carrier had RAF aircraft on board for an operational mission — although the Harrier GR7 has been used in a number of training exercises with Royal Navy carriers over the past 12 months.

Once room is made for the GR7s by removing Sea Harriers and helicopters, the carrier will be ready to head for the Gulf and she should be in place by next weekend.

Mr Clinton, who met his

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national security team yesterday, called Iraq's expulsion of the weapons inspectors an unacceptable challenge to the international community, and declared: "I intend to pursue this matter in a very determined way."

Bill Richardson, the US ambassador to the UN, warned of grave consequences and all American forces in the Gulf — 2,000 personnel, 17 warships and 200 aircraft — were on full alert.

Tony Blair and Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, discussed the crisis during talks at Downing Street and both strongly supported a tough allied stance. Madeleine Albright, the American Secretary of State, will hold talks with the Government when she arrives in London tomorrow.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, condemned Iraq's "latest act of obstruction", but said it was not too late for President Saddam Hussein to respond to the will of the international community while George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, described the *Invincible's* move as "a precautionary measure".

Last night, however, only the US and Britain from the 36-nation Gulf war coalition appeared to be preparing for a military confrontation with Iraq. Other European allies

condemned the Iraqi action, but there were no offers of military help.

Arab leaders called on Saddam to avoid a new conflict, but warned Washington against an attack. Several former key allies, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, have indicated that they would not allow their bases to be used by American or British forces for a fresh strike against Iraq.

Saddam ordered out the six American weapons inspectors after meeting his top military officials and putting his country on a war footing. Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, accused the inspectors of spying and told Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, that Iraq was not scared by American threats. He also denounced as unjust the Security Council resolution on Wednesday banning Iraqi officials from travelling and prolonging sanctions for at least six months.

The UN responded to the expulsion order by announcing that it was pulling out all but a handful of its 78 inspectors. The six Americans left last night, in spite of UN demands that they be allowed to fly out with the rest of the inspection staff — which includes ten Britons — today.

About six Chilean helicopter technicians will be left behind to form a skeleton staff at a UN monitoring centre, and all inspections have been suspended. Richard Butler, the UN chief arms inspector, said: "We will not accept this illegal separation of nationalities."



Jennima Khan arriving at St John's, Smith Square, in London yesterday for the memorial service for her father

Goldsmith — and all that jazz

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE early warning was delivered right at the beginning by Sir David Frost, who introduced yesterday's memorial service in London for the late Sir James Goldsmith at St John's, Smith Square, by saying that it was not going to be a religious occasion.

Goldsmith, who died in Spain in July, was not a religious man, but he was a spiritual one. The 700 guests who gathered to celebrate his remarkably multi-faceted life found themselves in an atmosphere more akin to carnival

than church, punctuated by jazz, a Mexican mariachi band and impromptu dancing. It seemed a fitting farewell for a true maverick.

The make-up of the audience — they could hardly be called a congregation — reflected the fullest of lives. There were his two surviving wives, Lady Annabel Goldsmith and Ginette Lery, and a clutch of his children led by his daughter Jennima, accompanied by her husband Imran Khan. Aides said that Laure Boulay de la Meurthe, Goldsmith's long-standing mistress, had been asked by the

family to stay away. The seats of St John's were filled with faces that reflected Goldsmith's business and political life: the media owners Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black, Lord McAlpine, who is now the figurehead of the Referendum Party; the leading Eurosceptic Tory MP Bill Cash; and former MPs Neil Hamilton and Jonathan Aitken.

Baroness Thatcher, in a tribute to the buccannery millionaire businessman turned Eurosceptic and founder of the Referendum Party, said that Sir James was

a giant of a man, and that no walk of life he trod had failed to bear his imprint.

She acknowledged that his business activities had once elicited a chorus of disapproval, but she said: "I never felt tempted to join the chorus for capitalism, remember, depends on the challenge of competition, not the complacency of corporatism."

Sir James, she said, had an intellectual clarity which he brought to bear on politics as much as business, but he also had the guts, which were just as important as wealth in

Continued on page 2, col 4

Whitehall cars go green in Blair's gas drive

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR has ordered that ministerial cars should be powered by environmentally-friendly natural gas fuel.

About 30 cars will switch to the new fuel at first, but eventually the 175-strong fleet of ministerial and pool cars will all be run on a green fuel, saving about 20p on a litre of petrol.

The move is part of the Government's pledge to "green" Whitehall and to help to restore quality air. The gas fuels reduce smog and other pollutants. Exempted from the move are the petrol-guzzling, armoured-plated Daimlers and Jaguars used by Mr Blair and his deputy, John Prescott. For security and cost reasons they will remain petrol-driven until they are replaced, but their successors will run on gas.

The first 30 government cars will switch from petrol in the new year when they will move on compressed natural gas, CNG, or liquefied petroleum gas, LPG. The rest of the fleet will convert within six years as vehicles are replaced.

Mr Blair himself also has the use of a gas-powered Rover left by John Major in the Downing Street pool. The Downing Street people-carrier, a Ford Galaxy used by the Blair family as well as by the Prime Minister and his senior aides, was converted to LPG two months ago.

One problem for ministers is that a gas tank runs for only about 150 miles and there are only 18 gas refuelling stations in the country. Government cars will fill up with gas at their depot in Vauxhall, south London. So all the cars will keep a petrol tank and will be able to switch fuels in emergencies.

It costs between £2,000 and £3,000 to convert a car to natural gas.

Rowing pair are rescued

Two British brothers who were lost at sea for six days during a transatlantic rowing race were rescued yesterday.

Matthew, 22, and Edward Borcham tried to signal that they were in trouble, believing that they had been seemingly rowing in circles after losing all power... Page 2

The long wait

A young footballer who had a trial for Manchester United in the summer of 1950 had to wait years before he received a letter from the club's talent scout asking him back again... Page 10

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Let Labour keep my £1m, car racing chief tells watchdog

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND ANDREW PIERCE

THE motor racing chief at the centre of the political donations row has appealed to the public standards watchdog to allow Labour to keep the £1 million he gave it before the general election.

Bernie Ecclestone says in a letter to *The Times* today that the advice to the Government from Sir Patrick Neill to pay back the money is a "gross, insulting and irrational" restriction of his freedom.

Mr Ecclestone, who offered a second gift to Labour after the election, states that there were "no strings attached" to his donation to the party. He says that he regards Tony Blair as "a person of exceptional ability" and made the donation to help him become more independent "from old fashioned vested interests in the Labour movement."



What are we meant to do if the gifts are returned to us?

The letter is the latest bizarre twist in a story that is still piling embarrassment on Mr Blair after the Government's decision to exempt Formula One racing from the tobacco advertising ban. Mr Ecclestone has appealed to Sir Patrick for him to reconsider his decision and is understood to be so upset over his treatment that he may not even pay the £1 million into his bank account when Labour sends it back.

He may leave it untouched — and technically still in Labour's possession — until his appeal to Sir Patrick has been considered.

He says in *The Times* that he has just paid an annual tax bill of £27 million for the privilege of living in England rather than a tax haven. With so large an investment it is reasonable to pay "a million or two extra" as a contribution "to a free and independent government for my country".

Labour and Sir Patrick last night published their ex-

change of letters between last Friday and Monday. This followed pressure from Sir Patrick on the Government to reveal the full contents, in the wake of the disclosure in *The Times* yesterday that there had been a second offer.

The letters confirm that Labour, in approaching Sir Patrick last Friday, was more concerned about the propriety of the potential second donation than the first. Downing Street and Labour headquarters were stunned when Sir Patrick advised the return of the first donation — he had not been told it was as big as £1 million — but had no choice.

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Volkswagen may bid for Rolls Royce

By JASON NISSE

VOLKSWAGEN, the German car group, seemed poised yesterday to make a bid for Rolls Royce, which Vickers wants to sell for a likely £400 million.

BMW, which supplies engines for Rolls Royces, is the favourite bidder, with Daimler Benz, Fiat, Chrysler and Ford also expressing interest. VW had not been expected to bid. Earlier this year, when it launched a £2.4 billion fundraising issue, it said it was not in the market for acquisitions.

However, VW called off the issue last month, and yesterday it said: "In the light of recent developments in the world capital markets, Volkswagen no longer rules out making an acquisition or taking a stake in its core business area." But the company refused to say whether or not it was bidding for Rolls Royce.

Yes ministers, Humphrey's gone to the country

By VALERIE ELLIOTT
WHITEHALL EDITOR

HE was once presumed dead, only to reappear to spend more time with his top family. But yesterday Humphrey left the Downing Street cat left the Government for good.

The change of administration and a prime ministerial family none too partial to felines have taken their toll. His exit from public life was deliberately quiet — on medical advice as he has a kidney complaint.

Yesterday afternoon the 11-year-old shipped out of the Cabinet Office for the last time. His precise destination is an official secret but he has

a good home with a staff member from the accommodation unit. One theory last night was that rather than opt for the Chiltern Hundreds, he had gone to try country life down in Sussex.

Yesterday he left with his essential accoutrements — his basket, litter-tray and favourite toy mouse. However, his departure from frontline politics was not accompanied by the traditional exchange of tributes. There was no personal statement from the Prime Minister or Mrs Blair, nor a final minicam from Humphrey.

The black and white survivor of changing political fortunes may have met his

match when Tony and Cherie Blair moved in. Mrs Blair was said to dislike cats, thinking them unhygienic, though she coddled Humphrey in front of the cameras to prove her critics wrong.

Staff at Number 10 and the Cabinet Office did issue a joint statement, saying: "We have all grown very fond of him but realise that he will be better off being cared for in a quiet environment away from the hustle and bustle of central London."

In the tradition of his namesake, Sir Humphrey Appleby, the fictional Permanent Secretary of BBC Television's *Yes Minister*, Civil Servants

praised his rigid impartiality. During the tenure of three prime ministers — Thatcher, Major and Blair — Humphrey, who arrived as a stray in 1989, meticulously ate all catfood brands lest the Government be accused of favouritism. Delicacies included Whitehall mince, and the Queen's ducklings from St James's Park near by.

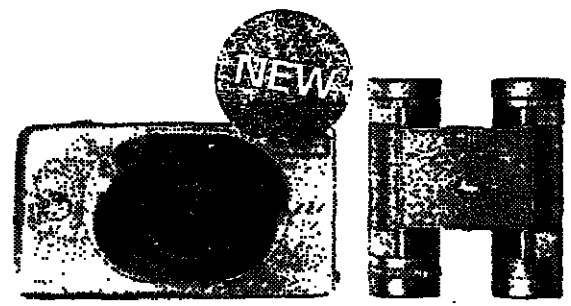
Since the election he has led a hectic life, being mistaken for a stray and catnapped, and almost run over by President Clinton's bullet-proof Cadillac.

□ Tailnote: Other cats need not apply for the post. It has been axed.



Humphrey: goodbye to life at No 10

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IN BRIEF

Prince leads tribute to Speaker

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Teenage crushes stand test of time

Group of friends who married in the Sixties have defied divorce statistics, reports

Joanna Bale

IN AN age when almost one in two marriages ends in divorce, six couples who wed in the 1960s after being childhood friends appear to have bucked the trend.

They met in the 1950s in a playground after school at Heston, West London. Fourteen children and five grandchildren later, their marriages and friendships are as strong as ever.

Val Horwood, 54, and her husband David, 55, of Fleet, Hampshire, remember playing together on the swings and pairing off as teenagers.

"It was love at first sight for me and Dave," Mrs Horwood said. They were the first of the group to wed, in 1963. "In those days everyone met up at the local park after school — there was nothing else to do."

The 12 even holiday together. There was a week-long skiing trip to Austria in 1991 and the next project is a cruise to the Caribbean.

"We have just as much fun now as in the old days, if not more," said Joan Bovington who married Brian, Mr Horwood's childhood best friend.

"There are so many shared memories — of the car rallies we used to do, or the times we met up at the North Star pub as youngsters. We were all under-age drinkers then, and thought we were very daring!"

"We went to see the Beatles together at the Hammersmith Odeon back in 1962 or 1963. "Maybe our marriages have lasted so long because of the types of families we come from — they are all very close. None of us lived with our boyfriends before we married. It just wasn't done back then."

Another member of the group, John Palmer, 57, became friends with them



through his younger sister Gina, who like many was a pupil at Heston secondary modern. He started courting his wife Ann Barry at the age of 15, when she studied at a neighbouring school, Woodfield Secondary Modern.

Two years before Ann there was her sister Joan, 54, who married a postman, Roger Eppley, in March 1965, a year after the Palmers married.

At their after-school gatherings, Gina Palmer met and fell in love with Christopher Dalton, 54. They married in September 1965.

The remaining members are Elaine and Terry Geere. Elaine went on to work in the same office as Ann Palmer. Mr Geere said: "Elaine and I have other friends outside the 12 that we haven't seen for years. It would be such an effort to meet up with them now. It would be wrong to talk about making the effort to be with this lot — it's a pleasure to get together."



Still together after all these years are, left to right: Christopher and Gina Dalton, Brian and Joan Bovington, David and Val Horwood, John and Ann Palmer, Terry and Elaine Geere, and Roger and Joan Eppley. Below, pictured in 1962 before they married are Roger Eppley and Joan Barry, Chris Dalton and Gina Palmer, and Ann Barry and John Palmer. The 12 have kept up the friendships they made as teenagers in a West London playground in the 1950s all their lives, even holidaying together. "We have just as much fun now as in the old days, if not more," Mrs Bovington said. Mr Geere said he and his wife found it an effort to see friends outside the 12. But "it would be wrong to talk about making the effort to be with this lot — it's a pleasure to get together."

Jury hears screams of child held in judo lock

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

A COUPLE will escape a murder charge for causing the death of their 18-month-old daughter because it is impossible to say who struck the fatal blows, a court was told yesterday.

An Old Bailey jury had heard the screams of Sarah Adams as she was bullied by her mother Lavinia Adams's boyfriend, John Sherrington, while she looked on. Mr Sherrington had taped his abuse on a cassette recorder.

There was no doubt that either or both of them had caused the injury that led to Sarah's death after two months of abuse, the jury was told. Orlando Pownall, for the prosecution, said that after the girl's death, police found the recorder in Mr Sherrington's flat in Sutton, Surrey.

On it, Mr Sherrington says: "I've got a mixture for you. You can have some car wash mixed with bleach, mixed with paint. A really nice drink for you. You'll love it."

On another section, he says: "I'll get her in a lock." This was a judo lock between his legs, Mr Pownall said, which Mrs Adams had later told police her boyfriend had done on three or four occasions.

Sarah can be heard screaming as Mr Sherrington taunts her, saying: "Got you in a lock, there, look at her."

But he tells the jury he will not "mark her" as she has a hospital appointment later that week. Mrs Adams's attempts to intervene "border on the indifferent", Mr Pownall said. She was making a note to herself to buy bubble bath and talking about wanting to do the washing up, he said.

The baby was admitted to hospital unconscious and died there in November last year of skull fractures and haemorrhaging of the brain.

Mrs Adams, 31, and Mr Sherrington, 33, jointly deny one charge of child cruelty and two charges of neglect. Mr Sherrington further denies three charges of cruelty and Mrs Adams denies one further charge of cruelty by biting Sarah. The case continues.

Judge compares woman's 'sex ordeal' to visit to the dentist

The latest controversial comment from the bench will fuel demands for more training, says Frances Gibb

A JUDGE has apologised for comparing a woman's alleged sex ordeal with a trip to the dentist.

The remark by Judge John Prosser, QC, who once suggested a rapist pay £500 to his victim for a holiday, came when the woman was giving evidence that she was forced into oral sex with a man.

Greg Bull, for the prosecution, asked if the woman said anything during the sex attack. She replied that she was unable to speak. Judge Prosser, 64, then told the distressed woman: "I know what you mean. It's like going to the dentist and he asks where are you going on holiday as he's drilling your

mouth." There was an uneasy silence at Cardiff Crown Court before the embarrassed judge apologised. He told the woman: "I'm very sorry, that was in very bad taste and I apologise to everyone."

After giving evidence the 29-year-old woman, who cannot be identified, said: "I was stunned. I could not believe what I was hearing. It was an ordeal for me to stand up in court and say what had happened. For the judge to come out with that sort of remark is totally insensitive."

The woman, a mother of two from the Rhymney Valley in South Wales, added: "At the time I thought the judge was trying to make a humorous comment to put me at ease. But a man in his position should not say things like that. His intentions may have been fine but he said the wrong thing."

The judge was sitting at the trial of Harold Baker, 48, a retired factory worker accused of 12 charges, including rape and indecent assaults. The charges date back over 20 years when the woman and

another alleged victim were children. The woman is an alleged victim of indecent assaults. She wants a personal apology from the judge. The case continues.

In 1993 Judge Prosser ordered a 16-year-old rapist to pay his school-girl victim £500 for "a good holiday" to get over her ordeal. The boy's sentence was later increased to two years in a detention centre by the Court of Appeal, which said Judge Prosser's sentence was "inappropriate".

Two weeks ago a judge rebuked

a 14-year-old girl who had alleged she was raped twice in a field to stop "sulking like a baby". The girl had turned her face from the video-link camera when she was giving evidence and covered it with her hair.

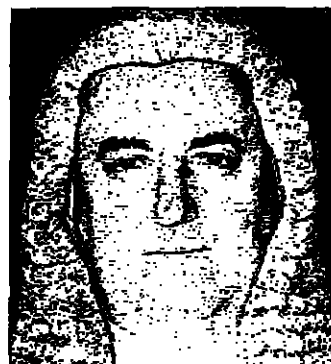
In another case earlier this week Judge Jeffrey Rucker, sitting at Southwark Crown Court, indicated that a college healthcare tutor who had fondled a 22-year-old girl student had done nothing "very serious".

The fresh series of insensitive

comments from the bench will fuel demands for more training for judges, although the Judicial Studies Board already runs regular "refresher" courses for judges in "equal treatment".

In an earlier case, Judge Prosser ordered a violent football player to watch videos of Gary Lineker, the former England player, to pick up tips on sportsmanship.

The judge, educated at Pontypriid Grammar School, is married and lists his recreations as watching cricket and television.



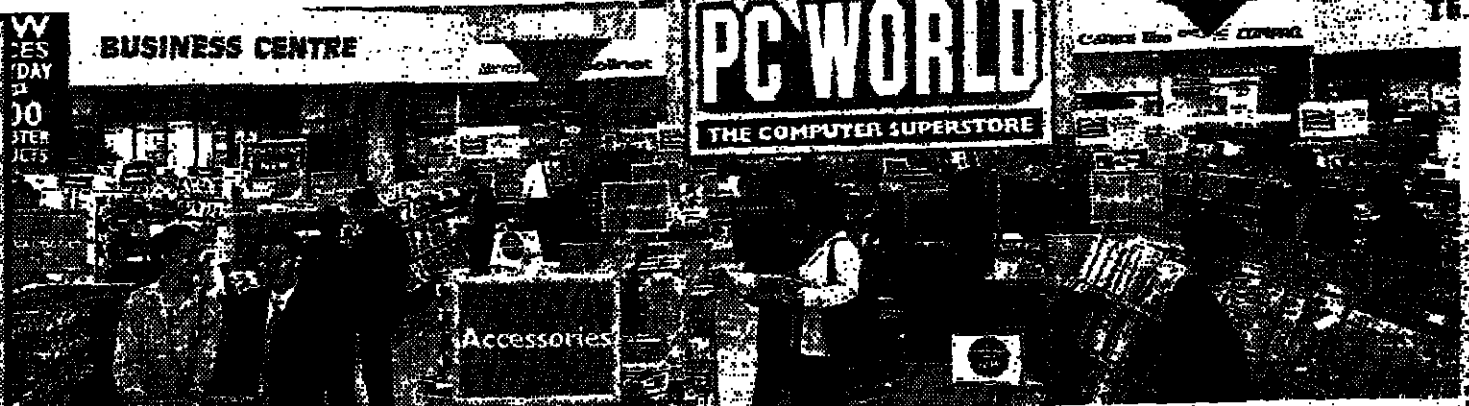
Judge Prosser: apologised for remark in bad taste

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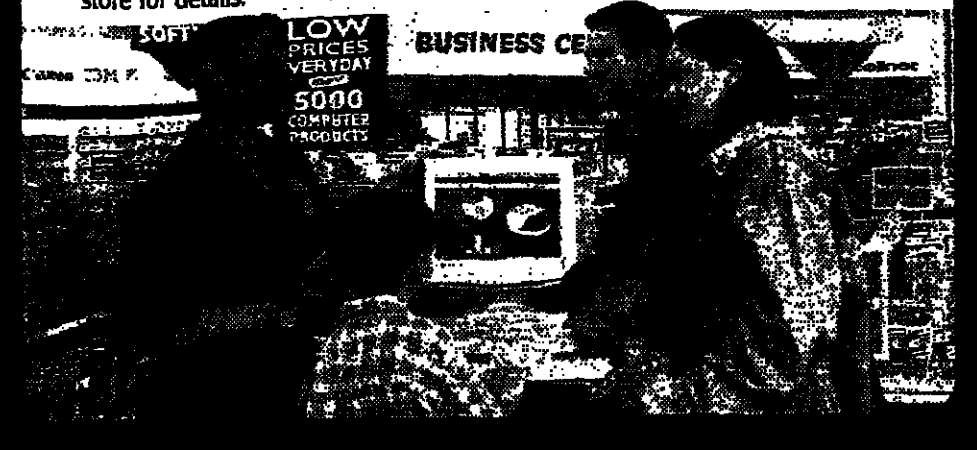


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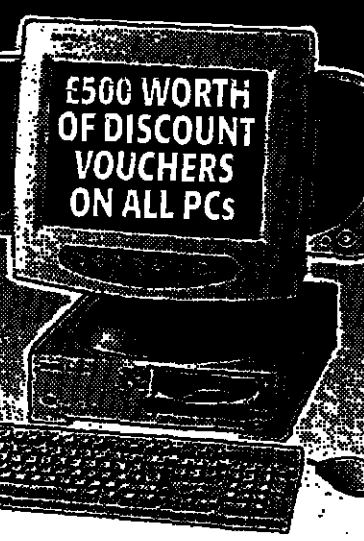
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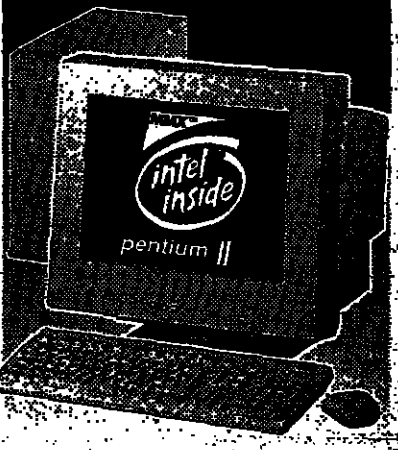
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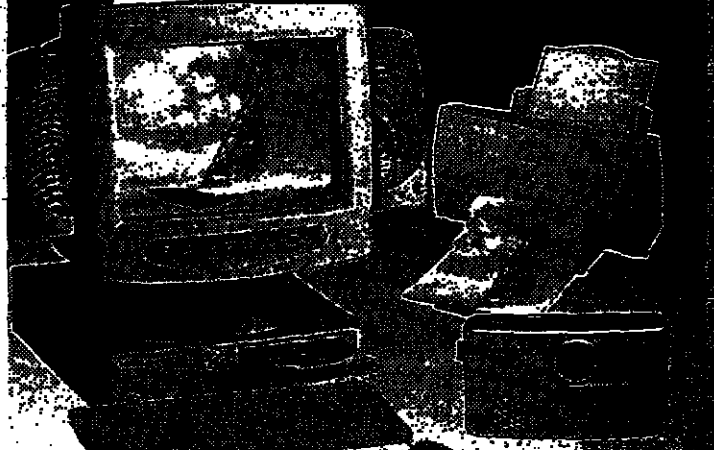
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'Random killer' struck in country lane

BURTON FLEMING

The village where the alleged killer was said to have driven in search of a victim
 Knifeman stopped his car to attack farmer's wife
 then fled, court was told. Paul Wilkinson reports

A FARMER'S wife was selected at random for murder as she walked along a country lane, a court was told yesterday. The killer of Margaret Wilson jumped from his car, cut her throat, then drove off before workers in fields nearby could come to her aid.

Among them were husband Edwin and her son Alan, who heard her scream. Andrew Campbell, for the prosecution, at Leeds Crown Court, said: "It was a motiveless attack on a perfectly innocent woman in broad daylight."

Keith Christian, the man accused of killing Mrs Wilson, 66, was said to have driven slowly through country lanes at Burton Fleming, East Yorkshire, looking for a victim. Moments before the murder, a white or silver Montego estate, similar to one owned by Mr Christian, 33, had driven past another villager, Elise Cundall, as she walked her dogs. Mr Campbell said: "The driver was the only occupant. He looked at her and such was his expression, a hard and piercing stare, that she immediately became frightened."

The car drove on but she turned and ran back towards the houses. Several details of her description matched that of Mr Christian, he said. Mr Christian denies murder.

The court was told that Mrs Wilson had lived almost all her life in the area, enjoying country walks "without any apprehension of danger". On the day of her death, her daughter Heather had visited her, and Mrs Wilson had asked her for a lift. She returned home to Kettleston a few miles away, so that she could walk back. "Heather's last memory of her mother is seeing her in the rear-view mirror, walking briskly along," Mr Campbell said.

Two farm workers saw her and then noticed a white car behind her. The driver got out and ran up to her. "They saw him grab her from behind and then they both disappeared

below the hedge line. Then they saw the man run back to his car and speed away. They believed she had been mugged, and ran to her assistance."

They found her lying face down in a pool of blood. She had two slash wounds to the throat. One was 6in long and would not have been fatal, but the second ran 1in from ear to ear, severing the carotid artery and jugular vein. It was so deep that the blade had cut tissue on her spine.

A motorist went for help, going to the farm where Mrs Wilson's son and husband were working. Her son Alan told the court: "I heard a scream-cum-yell, not a proper scream. I looked up and my dog looked up and barked."

Her husband said: "I saw a woman lying on the verge. I recognised it was my wife, even though I could not see her face."

Police found the murder weapon by the roadside. Checks on Montegos led police to Mr Christian's home in Driffield five miles away, but he maintained that at the time of the killing he had been driving home from his job at a frozen food factory in Scarborough. The knife was said to have been used in the food processing industry, but detectives had not discovered where it came from.

Detectives said that he could have left his job at 3pm as he claimed and been at the murder scene at 3.30. In all, he was interrogated on five occasions. During questioning in April 1996, he changed his story, saying he had been helping his in-laws move from Scarborough to Driffield. However, phone records showed someone had made a call from his in-laws house when they were supposed to be on the road with him.

Forensic scientists had examined the fleece jacket, sweatshirt, and jogger bottoms he was wearing on the day. Fibres matched 78 others found on Mrs Wilson's coat, skirt, gloves. Mr Campbell asked the jury to consider the odds against the combination of fibres from those three garments being found on different items of Mrs Wilson's clothing. "The likelihood of it being someone else is somewhat small," he said. Further a single red-white and blue viscose fibre identical to ones from Mrs Wilson's skirt was found tightly wrapped in a tiny ball of the fabric of his jacket.

The trial continues.

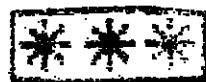


Margaret Wilson with her family: she enjoyed country walks "without any apprehension of danger"

MAGAZINE

BOB DYLAN

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Millennium projects cash in on the lottery

Latest awards range from millions of pounds for a science park and bridges to thousands for drinking fountains, Daniel McGrory reports

BRIDGES spanning the Thames and the Tyne, public squares in Coventry and Leeds, and a hundred drinking fountains for people and their pets are among the 71 projects given £221 million by the Millennium Commission yesterday.

Not all will be ready by January 1, 2000, but Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, insisted he was not just throwing lottery money at these schemes for the sake of it. "Each of these projects promises something special and will be exciting and meaningful for years to come," he said yesterday. "Those who proposed ideas for what they thought was easy money were cast aside."

The biggest award goes to the "K-Site" in Glasgow, which receives £35 million for a national science centre on a five-acre site on the Clyde with its own millennium tower.

The £7.1 million Bankside footbridge will be London's first new Thames crossing for more than a century. It has been designed by Sir Norman Foster, the architect, and the sculptor Sir Anthony Caro to link St Paul's Cathedral with the new Tate Gallery. The

£9.2 million bridge across the Tyne will also be a footbridge, running from the Quayside in Newcastle to Gateshead. The tower and cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, will be completed 400 years after it was started, thanks to £5.1 million. Bath receives £6.7 million for a new spa complex, and Wales is awarded £27 million for its Millennium Centre in Cardiff Bay, a showcase for musicals, opera and dance.

More modest sums are awarded to 29 village halls, 100 rural churches and community centres. There is also a £172,000 grant for a nationwide chain of drinking fountains, including four "millennium fountains", for people and their pets.

A handout of £4 million to the Everyman Library will enable it to donate 245 classic

titles to 4,500 state secondary schools and create a Web site for young people around the world.

The troubled Moss Side estate in Manchester, where in recent months the drug gangs who controlled the area have been tackled successfully, is to get £1.4 million for the Youth Powerhouse that will provide education and training.

Rotherham council receives the biggest grant in England — £18.6 million — to turn a redundant steel mill into an exhibition centre about British industry. Hull has been given £18.4 million for the European Maritime Institute.

Northern Ireland has received most money per head, nearly £50, followed by Wales, Scotland and East Anglia. The East Midlands and the South East have received the least. The Millennium Commission

has now supported 185 projects involving work on almost 200 sites with grants totalling £1,236 million. Mr Smith said there was still up to £100 million for more projects. His hope is that areas such as the East Midlands can come up with valid projects in time to meet the final deadline.

Erik Sorensen, chief executive of the commission, said the fact that some projects would not be open by January 1, 2000, was not a failing. "Most projects will be ready by December 31, 1999. Other projects will come through in the year 2000. If we tried to open all the projects by January 1, the logistical exercise would be overwhelming for the construction industry and for everyone as a whole. We have got to be sensible and that is why we are having a rolling programme of completion."

He and Mr Smith said they were confident all the projects could meet their promised private funding. Mr Smith, who is chairman of the commission, said: "They will all act as milestones of achievement at the end of the millennium and markers of aspiration into the next."



Bath is to receive £6.7 million to update patients' treatment at a new spa complex

Award for Wales arts centre risks hostility

By Marcus Binney

THE Millennium Commission has courted renewed controversy by offering a £27 million grant to the National Arts Centre for Wales, a successor project to the rejected Cardiff Bay Opera House designed by Zaha Hadid.

The architectural world will be angered that a much less adventurous design has been adopted. Work on the centre, designed by South Wales architects Percy Thomas Partnership, begins early next year and should finish by 2001.

The Wales Millennium Centre, which will cost £86 million, will house the Welsh National Opera, a giant-screen cinema and an industrial and maritime museum. It will also stage West End musicals.

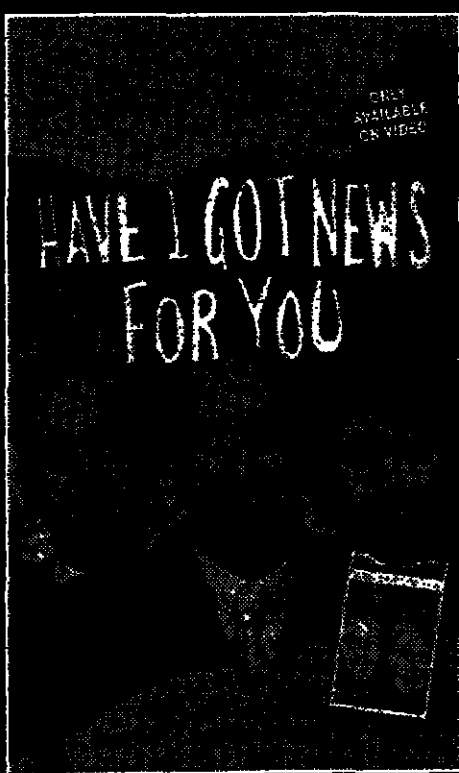
Most of the new grants reflect the Government's strong reaction against grand projects in favour of smaller schemes. But the big names in British architecture are taking most of the larger grants — Sir Norman Foster for the new Thames bridge at Barking and Nicholas Grimshaw's new spa centre for Bath.

The biggest surprise is the offer of a grant for an imposing new Gothic tower to complete the unfinished cathedral at Bury St Edmunds, designed by Hugh Matthews. The project had little chance of funding until there was a surge of support after Matthews's design was published in *The Times*. It shows a mastery of Gothic detail and proportion not seen since the early years of this century.

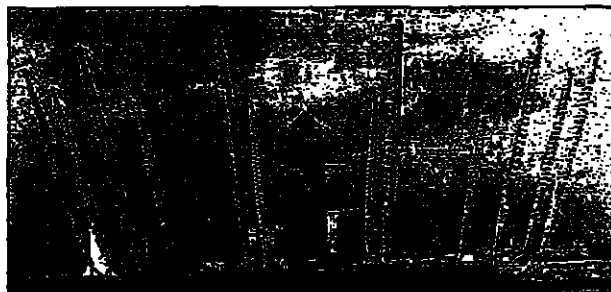
MILLENNIUM PROJECT GRANTS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools: Millennium Library, £4 million. Rural Churches: £2.5 million to adapt 100 churches for community use. Drinking fountains: up to £172,000 to provide 100 new drinking fountains. Bath: £6.7 million for new spa complex. Leeds: £5.4 million for Millennium Square. Bury St Edmunds: £5.1 million to complete St Edmundsbury Cathedral. Manchester: new bridge, £9.2 million. Derbyshire: £8.2 million for visitor centre on site of former colliery. Bury St Edmunds: £265,500 for Red Lodge Community Centre. Bath: £206,050 for Tiverton Village Hall. Devon: £387,500 new community centre. Devon: £167,514 for youth centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffordshire: £220,775 for village hall. West Sussex: £253,700 for new village hall in Scares Hill. Liverpool: £562,232 for community centre for West Derby. Northern Ireland: community centre in Hill of Hollands. Essex: £181,415 for community hall. Kilmarnock: £300,000 for community hall. Gwent: £123,000 for village hall. Rotherham: £18.6 million to convert Templeborough Steel Mill. Hull: £18.4 million for European Maritime Institute. Coventry: £10.2 million for new city centre. Cardiff: £27 million for science and cultural centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glasgow: national science centre, £35 million. Hampshire: INTECH 200 centre, £4.7 million. York: new bridge, £2.2 million. Bedfordshire: £2.4 million to create Somerby Country Park. Leicestershire: £2.2 million for new National Centre. Bradford: £2.2 million for North Sea Haven educational centre. Liverpool: £1.9 million for National Porcelain Centre. Manchester: youth centre, £1.5 million. Accrington: community centre, £1.3 million. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dumfries: £1.6 million for science centre. North Berwick: £1 for new Wildlife and Environmental Centre. London: £4.7 million for Millennium Complex. Ulster University: £1.6 million. Co Fermanagh: quay building work, £500,000. Walsby: £260,000 community centre. Walsby: £265,000 for renewable energy project. Alford: £275,000 to complete restoration of Tenterden Kent and East Sussex Railway. Farnham: £241,000 for new town square. Jarrow: £500,000 for new building for handicapped. Derbyshire: £215,000 for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Aerial Walkways: £138,800 for St Tiggyrwen Wildlife Hospital. Wiltshire: leisure venue, £9.9 million. Southwest: Millennium bridge, £7.1 million. Southwest: Cathedral, £3.9 million. Malden: new park, £4.1 million. Mining areas: community centres, £5 million. Whitby: Nature Park, £1.5 million. Liverpool: community centre, £773,250. Winchester: Memorial Hall, £194,000. Derbyshire: Huddersfield Village Hall, £146,000. Essex: St Barnabas Church Hall, £425,357. Gloucestershire: Ribblesworth Village Centre, £490,000. Kirkby-in-Cleveland: St Augustine's Hall, £224,000. Hampshire: Kettlewell Millennium Village Hall, £150,000. Hampshire: Cliddesden Village Hall, £138,250. Darby Green and Frognon Social Hall, £174,276. Upham Village Hall, £155,000. York: Helpertby Village Hall, £181,000. Sheffield: St Aden's Church, £409,500. Kent: Egham Community Centre, £209,033. Hertfordshire: Masswells Village Hall, £119,840. Oxfordshire: Charwell Village Hall, £369,000. Buckinghamshire: Lacey Green and Loddley Row Village Hall, £167,790. Cambridgeshire: Buckden Village Hall, £320,500. Cambridgeshire: Over Community Centre, £337,536. Essex: Great Baddow Community Centre, £265,525. |
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Michael Heseltine, attacked handling of the project

Heseltine attacks Blair for causing delays on dome

By Carol Midgley, Media Correspondent

MICHAEL HESELTINE criticised Tony Blair's pre-election handling of the Millennium Dome project yesterday, accusing him of causing pointless delays through "macho politics".

The former Deputy Prime Minister, who is a Millennium Commission, said there was no leeway for further setbacks. "There is a critical path and we're on it," he said.

Mr Heseltine, who supervised the early stages of the project in Greenwich when in government, told the Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee that mistakes had probably been made in the original planning of the dome.

He also admitted that the public had not been "sold" the idea of the dome properly but claimed that that was impossible. "If you take 300 acres on the banks of the Thames and put a tube station in the middle of it, it will take off. But don't ask me if Marks & Spencer will have a store there because I don't know."

Keith Bales, who helped to develop Walt Disney World

and the Houston Space Centre, told the committee that the main problem was the "lack of information about what is to be included within the structure." He added: "It should be a priority to finalise this and to launch a PR campaign to start educating businesses and the public about the project."

Mr Heseltine told the committee: "Before the election, my role was played by Michael Montague. He knew everything about the project. The moment the heat came on, he was swept aside effectively by Tony Blair and his colleagues, who in my view sought to make political macho politics of their determination to fix budgets."

Lord Montague denied Mr Heseltine's claims last night. He said: "Mr Heseltine is entitled to his interpretation. But I engaged in very close liaison continuously with then Shadow Heritage Secretary Jack Cunningham, and he was in contact with the leader's office, so to argue there was any division between us is completely untrue."

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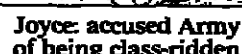
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BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

Although Mr. Robertson's



The source added: "He is not accusing the Army of

□ Mr Robertson also announced yesterday a new partnership between the Ministry of Defence and industry to remove cost overruns and time delays from equipment orders.



Among the options are for the yacht to be docked at Govan in Glasgow, near where she was built on the Clyde, or for her to be moored at Greenwich for the Millennium.

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Comic banishes Dan in act of desperation

After 60 years, publicity stunt may be just Dandy, writes Shirley English

HE WAS the first hero with designer stubble, he quit smoking and cow pies to keep up with health trends, and he was last seen sailing into the sunset with the Spice Girls. But yesterday Desperate Dan was said to have been dumped because he is out of fashion.

In what may be the biggest publicity stunt by a comic since Superman was reported dead, the publishers of *The Dandy* announced that they were looking for a replacement with "street cred" to replace the bristle-chinned cowpoke whose enormous appetite and strength has provided storylines for 60 years. This Saturday he will be missing from its pages for the first time since December 1937.

It was hinted, however, that he may make guest appearances in the future, or may even return if public demand is overwhelming. By sheer coincidence, a commemorative book, *The Legend of Desperate Dan*, is being published to mark the sixtieth anniversary.

At the height of *The Dandy's* popularity in the 1950s, it sold more than 1 million copies each week. Sales are now about 125,000. Morris



The first edition of *The Dandy* in December 1937

Heggie, *Dandy* editor for the past 13 years, is the prime mover behind Dan's demise to "freshen up" the comic's image. He said: "There was resistance and it will be interesting to see what happens. It is important when the comic is 60 years old that it keeps looking as modern as the medium will allow."

The change was broken to readers in a three-week storyline in which Dan went on a bungee jump, hit the ground with his chin and cracked open an oil well. He became fabulously wealthy and decided to quit to enjoy his new life of luxury. In the final scene, he sailed away on a yacht with the Spice Girls on board to serenade him, and the *Dandy* Editor pleading with him to change his mind.

Desperate Dan and Korky the Cat are the only characters to have appeared in every edition of *The Dandy*. He was created by the late artist Dudley D. Watkins, of *The Broons* and *Oor Wullie* fame, in collaboration with Albert Barnes, the first *Dandy* Editor, whose prominent chin and large appetite were the starting point for the character.

Initially he was a desperado, always in trouble with the sheriff of Cactusville, a surreal combination of Texas and Britain. The famous horned cowpokes, based on a dustbin lid, made their debut in 1939 with the arrival of Dan's long-suffering Aunt Aggie.

During the war years, Dan sank U-boats and shot down

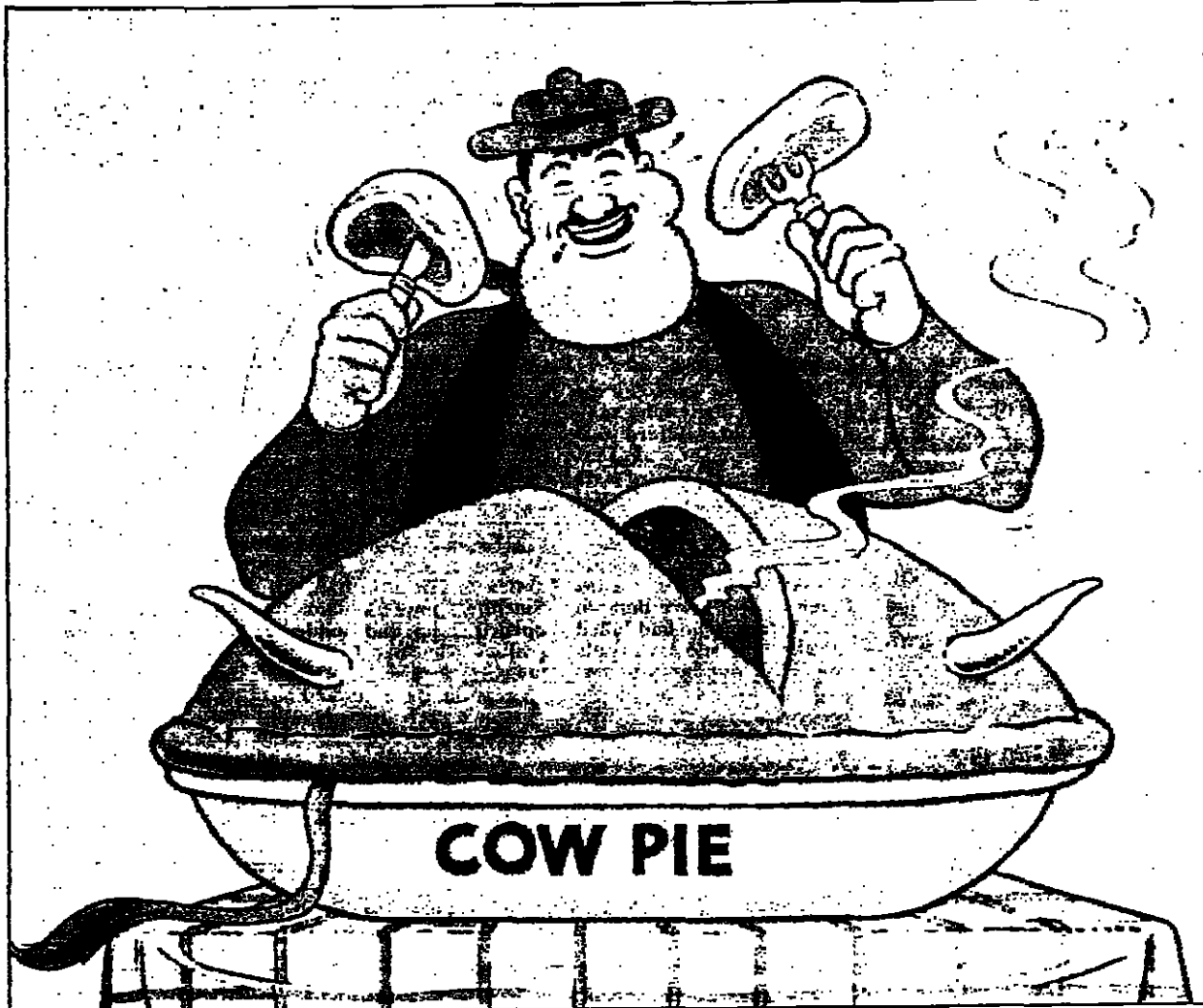
enemy planes with a pea shooter, and was made an honorary member of the Korean War Veterans Society. He cleaned his teeth with a power drill and drank Owl Hoot Juice, but in the 1980s he was forced to give up smoking, and last March he was banned from eating cow pies because of the BSE scare, turning to fish, bean and veggie versions cooked by Aunt Aggie.

David Donaldson, managing editor of the Scottish publishers D.C. Thomson, said: "We have tried our best to make Dan move with the times, but children simply aren't interested in cowboys any more. They are more

interested in television cartoons and computer games." During the coming weeks, the Editor will be seen to "interview" characters including Arnold Schwarzenegger and Chris Evans for the vacant post. However, Ken Harrison, 57, who has drawn Dan since 1982, said: "I would not be surprised if he made a comeback by popular demand."

There were signs of the first stirrings of protest last night. The Lord Provost of Dundee, Mervyn Rolfe, said: "This is desperate news. We understand the old boy may have been getting a bit saddle sore, but to retire him before he is even eligible for a bus pass smacks of the worst excesses of ageism."

Fred Morrison, a psychologist at Aberystwyth University, said: "Dan has played an important role in helping children to grow up. Children are naturally violent, and by reading Dan they were able to defuse some of that violence without doing any damage."



Desperate Dan: he gave up cow pie in the BSE scare, but the publishers say children don't like cowboys



Inspiration: Barnes took it on the chin

£100,000 research tackles cat allergy

By TIM JONES

PEOPLE who suffer allergic reactions to their cats may soon be able to live in healthy harmony with their pets. The British Allergy Foundation is funding a £100,000 research programme to develop a spray to stop cats depositing skin particles all over the home.

Although cats that curl up so comfortably on their owners' laps are very fussy about personal hygiene, they cause misery to an estimated five million people through their

saliva and dander, or skin particles. Usually, the allergy is tolerable but some people endure constant hayfever-like symptoms. According to Robert Davies, president of the foundation, in extreme cases reaction can be severe enough to cause death.

The research programme, sponsored by the father of a girl who suffers badly from allergic reaction, is being conducted by the healthcare unit of Southampton University.

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Models seem skinny 'because they're tall'

No cause for alarm over their health, says survey. Nick Nuttall reports

THE popular belief that supermodels are unnaturally and unhealthily thin is a myth, scientists say.

British psychologists who surveyed 300 models said yesterday that, far from being too skinny, most models are curvaceous and have classic hour-glass figures.

"The only real difference is that they are a few inches taller," said Martin Tovee, a lecturer in psychology at the University of Newcastle who specialises in eating disorders and body shape.

While their statistics indicate that models are underweight compared with shorter and heavier "normal" women, Dr Tovee said: "Supermodels are on average lighter than women of a comparable age. But only slightly."

Several researchers and experts have accused the fashion industry of promoting an almost anorexic look on the catwalk. It has been feared that these allegedly unnaturally thin models are contributing to eating disorders in girls.

But Dr Tovee said that one or two supermodels, such as Kate Moss and Jodie Kidd, had tarnished all models with a super-thin reputation. "We now have some hard data."

The survey, part of which is published in *The Lancet*, was based on 300 fashion models,



Super-thin Kate Moss, left, and Jodie Kidd, said to tarnish the reputation of all supermodels

including Sophie Anderton and Eva Herzigova, whose vital statistics are published by their agencies.

The women were compared with 300 pin-ups from *Playboy* magazine, 300 university students classed as "normal" women, 30 bulimic women and 30 anorexics.

An average supermodel is 5ft 8in; weighs 8st 4lb; has a 34.7in bust; 25in waist and 34.9in hip. The pin-ups are similar but shorter at 5ft 5in.

"Normal" women, based on 21-year-old students, are 5ft

4in, weigh 9st 1lb; have a 35in bust; 28.1in waist and 38in hips. The average anorexic is 5ft 4in, weighs 6st 3lb; has a 30.57in bust; 24in waist and 31.68in hips.

The findings, used to make calculations of features such as the waist-hip ratio and bust-hip ratio, show that supermodels and pin-ups are close to the ideal shape for attracting the opposite sex.

"Men are supposed to find a waist-hip ratio of 0.7 the most attractive. That is, the waist is seven-tenths the size of the

hips. It seems to be hard-wired into the male brain and signals that the woman is fertile," Dr Tovee said.

The study found that supermodels and pin-ups both tend to have such a ratio. "They also tend to have hour-glass figures as shown by the bust-hip ratio," he said.

The reason why supermodels appear thinner than the norm is their height, which, on average, is three to four inches more, he said.

"They look less curvy in the same way that a tall hour-glass looks less curvy than a short one. It is because the degree of change of the angle is less over a given distance," Dr Tovee said.

He said the findings had important implications for people who pursue diets to try to look like a supermodel or a *Vogue* cover-girl. "The anorexic has a tubular rather than a curvy shape," Dr Tovee said. "So if you diet too hard, you are really ruining, rather than enhancing, your attractiveness."

"A study in 1980 showed that women were becoming less curvaceous. But our data shows that their shapes have not changed for between ten and 15 years. They have reached a plateau that, one presumes, men are happy with."



Fashion model Sophie Anderton's vital statistics were included in the survey

IN BRIEF

Research saves student from jail

A student was spared from a jail sentence for supplying friends with Ecstasy because of the potential benefits of his research into a drug to relieve

angina. Judge Denis Clark told Neil Andrew: "I'm not prepared to disrupt that work. I think it would be advantageous to the general public that you should continue to make progress on that project."

Andrew, 23, of Manchester, was given a suspended sentence at Liverpool Crown Court after admitting two charges of supplying drugs.

Birth risk

Children conceived by a new technique in which sperm is injected into an ovum are twice as likely to have major birth defects than those conceived normally, according to Australian research.

Van Gogh to go

A Van Gogh drawing, *Harvest in Provence*, bought at Sotheby's for almost £9 million, is to be given an export licence because no British institution has matched the purchase price.

Cancer finding

Researchers have discovered that a cancer cell's self-destruct mechanism lies on its surface. They believe the finding will mean new drugs will be able to attack the cells without damaging normal ones.

Clean-up order

Cambridge University has been issued with an Environment Agency enforcement notice after an unauthorised radioactive material, americium, was found at the university's biochemistry department.

Injury payout

A man whose gutlet was destroyed when he drank caustic soda from a lemonade bottle is to be paid £170,000 compensation by insurers. Lee Ellison, 27, from Stockport, has to be fed through a tube.

Cyberpet rites

The first cemetery for cyberpets has opened at Pontsmill pet cemetery near St Blazey in Cornwall. For £4.50, children can have their Tamagotchis put in a casket and buried with a marker.

Star Trek actor puts Othello in reverse

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

PATRICK STEWART, the British actor released from duty at the bridge of the *Starship Enterprise*, is to play Othello in an American production in which the Moor will be a white man at a black Venetian court.

Stewart, 57, known to *Star Trek* fans as Captain Jean-Luc Picard, has always wanted to play the part but, in recent years, actors "blackening up" for the part has been frowned upon, and few white actors now tackle one of the great Shakespearean roles.

A former member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, he thought of reversing the racial lines of *Othello* several years ago but could not find a willing theatre company until he approached the Shakespeare Theater in Washington. The production, which is sold out, opens next week.

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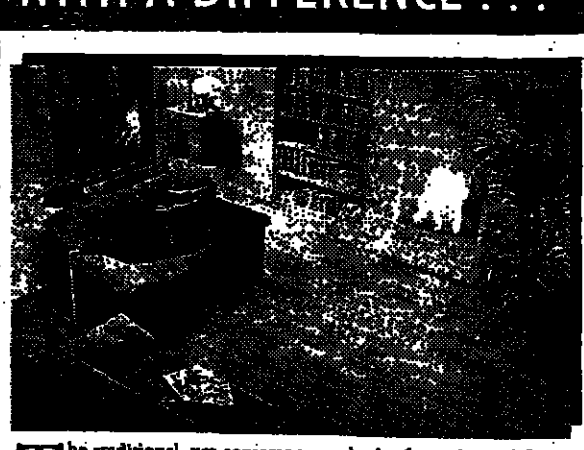
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Blair knew about offer of second gift

Philip Webster outlines the events that led to the Prime Minister's most difficult period in office so far

TONY BLAIR knew when he met Bernie Ecclestone on October 16 that the Formula One chief had offered Labour a second big donation. It was confirmed yesterday.

The disclosure by *The Times* yesterday that there had been an offer of another gift on top of the £1 million handed over in January was the latest example of how information has dripped into the public domain in a saga that has brought great embarrassment on the Government.

Labour's famed publicity machine has come unstuck over the past few days. Usually so adept at timing its own announcements, this week it has found itself constantly reacting to events and disclosures made from outside its tight control.

It took a long time to confirm that Mr Ecclestone had made a donation; it only confirmed that the figure was £1 million after *The Times* suggested an even higher figure on Tuesday morning; and then it only confirmed the second offer after *The Times* uncovered the letter to Labour from Sir Patrick Neill, the standards watchdog, in which he referred to a "second proposed donation".

A detailed timetable of the events that have led to Mr Blair's worst few days since winning the election suggests why the knowledge that Mr Ecclestone had suggested giving more money would have been embarrassing for the Prime Minister at that fateful encounter on October 16.

Only two days before, Frank Dobson, his Health Secretary, the man who had announced the tobacco sponsorship ban, had minutes Mr Blair propos-

ing a longer exemption for Formula One.

The argument inside the Government was shifting in favour of Formula One: indeed motor industry sources have disclosed to *The Times* that Mr Ecclestone and Max Mosley, president of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile, sensed at that meeting that the battle was close to being won.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the second offer, made in the early summer, raised questions of a conflict of interest and was not accepted for the time being.

Ironically, when Tom Sawyer, Labour's general secretary, wrote to Sir Patrick last Friday, as media interest in the possibility of an Ecclestone donation became intense, it appeared that his only real concern was the second offer. It turned out to be probably the most expensive letter ever sent by a political party.

Labour felt that the £1 million donation came into a different category because it was made before the election. Sir Patrick's advice hit Labour like a bombshell — no one had expected that they would have to pay back the £1 million. Sir Patrick had not been told the amount, and has since said he suspected it was between £50,000 and £100,000.

Mr Blair has been in particular trouble this week because of the impression that he virtually single-handedly overruled the health department. The decision timetable suggests that that is not so.

The key dates are as follows.

January: Bernie Ecclestone donates £1m to Labour.

May 19: Mr Dobson announces intention on tobacco sponsorship ban to Royal College of Nursing but adds the Government does not want to harm sport.

May 29: Mr Dobson minutes Mr Blair seeking agreement for a negotiating position on the European Union directive on tobacco advertising and states that "sport will be an issue."

June 5: Tessa Jowell, the health minister, attends meeting of European health ministers to signal support for directive but raises "practical problems" over sports sponsorship.

July 17: Mr Dobson sent minute to the Prime Minister on strategy for the directive. He says that the Government broadly supportive but op-

TOM SAWYER'S REQUEST FOR ADVICE

DEAR SIR PATRICK

After discussion with the Prime Minister, I am writing to seek your urgent advice on a matter of interest to us, and we believe, the public interest.

The Labour Party accepted a substantial donation in January this year from Bernie Ecclestone (Vice-President of the FIA), for the general election campaign. This will be listed in our 1997 accounts to be presented to the conference in October 1998.

It was made clear to Mr Ecclestone at the time of the gift that no donation could or would be accepted if the donor had any expectation of influence over policy and no policies could be changed as a result of any such donation. Nor did Mr Ecclestone make any such suggestion.

In the manifesto, the Labour Party said it would ban tobacco advertising. Though limited to advertising, this was generally understood to cover at least some aspects of a sponsorship.

The Government announced through its Health Secretary, Frank Dobson, on 19 May that we wanted a complete ban on sports advertising and sponsorship, though we recognised the need to protect the future of sport. This could be achieved by national policies similar to those in other countries. After the election, the Government also became involved in discussions with other European countries about the possibility of an EU-wide directive banning or limiting such advertising and sponsorship.

After careful consideration,



we concluded that to ban such sponsorship completely Europe-wide from Formula 1 would result in British losing its Grand Prix and the race going elsewhere; and if there was a total ban in Europe then Europe could be vacated as a venue and the races moved to Asia where a number of countries are pressing strongly to host such races. Exemptions for Formula 1 are commonplace in other countries for these reasons. On this basis we decided we had to ensure that whilst holding to the general policy of a ban we could not agree — along with several other member States — to a ban on Formula 1. We therefore, in line with the others, proposed that the Directive should exempt Formula 1.

These decisions were not, of course, in any way influenced by Mr Ecclestone's contribution some months before. Mr Ecclestone has, since the election, offered a further donation. The Prime Minister has decided that in the light of our approach to the Directive and to avoid any

possible appearance of a conflict of interest we should consult you on whether it may properly be accepted. The position which we have adopted thus far has been to refuse this further donation, but we wish to be advised whether this is a position which we need to maintain. This approach distinguished between a pre-election donation which, of course, was not a factor in the Government's decision... and the receipt of post election donations where an appearance of a conflict of interest might be thought to arise.

However, clearly, the case raises difficult questions. The gift or offer of it did not and could not influence our approach to the EU Directive. But to what extent are we unable to receive gifts, as a party, from people in business whose businesses may at any point come across the desk of government? In truth, most businesses are involved with government in some degree or other.

If a situation like this arises: a) can we carry on as a party to accept a gift from business, provided there is no question of any agreement, explicit or implicit, of favours by government, and b) when subsequently a business that has made a gift comes into contact with Government, what should, if anything, happen to the original gift?

It seems to us that this is a crucial set of issues. I look forward to hearing from you. We are happy to abide by whatever ruling you give.

TOM SAWYER
GENERAL SECRETARY

SIR PATRICK NEILL'S REPLY

DEAR MR SAWYER

Thank you for your letter of 7 November. You asked for urgent advice.

My committee has not yet received the precise terms of the remit in respect of party funding, and I do not think it would be sensible for me, in advance of that remit or our study, to endeavour to formulate the sort of general principles about the receipt or refusal of donations which you seek. I can assure you that we will address these problems as part of our study.

I have however considered the particular donation and the prospective donation carefully in the light of the principles which the Committee has already published in previous reports. I have also consulted the Code of Conduct and Guidance on Procedures for Ministers (Cabinet Office, July 1997). One principle which emerges clearly from the reports and from the code is that the conduct of those in public positions must be judged not only by the reality but also by the appearance.

In addition this committee has established seven principles of public life. Two of them, integrity and openness, appear to me to be relevant in the present context. I quote:

INTEGRITY
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OPENNESS
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.



should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

In the light of these principles it seems clear to me that you are right to declare the first donation from Mr Ecclestone. I understand that your normal procedures would cause you to list this donation in your 1997 accounts to be presented to the annual conference in October 1998. I do not, however, believe that in the present circumstances it would be right to delay announcing this donation until October 1998. Questions are already being publicly asked about this gift, and delay in announcing it could carry the implication, which you would be the first to repudiate, that receipt of the gift was in some way questionable.

As the committee said in its first report, whatever the true picture, "much of the public anxiety about standards of conduct in public life is based on perceptions and beliefs... The erosion of public confidence in the holders of public office is a serious matter." It is my view that you should announce the donation as swiftly as possible.

As to the second proposed donation, you tell me that you have until now refused to accept it. You wish to be advised whether that is a position which you need to maintain. My advice is that it is.

Your question (b) at the top of page 4 of your letter, when applied in relation to the first donation, raises the issue as to whether this donation can be retained or should be returned. This I regard as a more difficult question and one on which I would have welcomed the views of the committee. My own opinion is that, while no criticism can fairly be made of the receipt of the first donation, in the light of the way in which government policy has developed, ministers could well conclude that, in the special circumstances of this case, their freedom of action would be, and would be seen to be, enhanced, if the donation were to be returned.

It is not clear to me whether you wish this advice to be made public. However, I should say that, if I am asked, in line with my committee's principle of openness, I would want to confirm that I have submitted this advice. I note that you have discussed this with the Prime Minister, to whom I am therefore copying this letter.

YOURS SINCERELY
SIR PATRICK NEILL QC

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Casual attitude has exposed Labour team's inexperience

TONY BLAIR ought to ask himself a simple question this morning. Can he imagine Clement Attlee or James Callaghan agreeing to meet a businessman like Bernie Ecclestone over a highly sensitive political issue after a £1 million contribution to Labour and discussion about another substantial donation? Of course not. It may be very "New Labour" to be pally with such colourful entrepreneurs rather than with union leaders, but Mr Blair has appeared naive and glib. Someone in his private office should have seen the dangers and sounded the alarm.

The problem is less the basic decision over Formula One, where ministers have a case, albeit a weaker one than they pretend, than the evasive way it has been handled. The

Prime Minister called in Sir Patrick Neill, new chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, not when Mr Blair took the decision but only several days later when his staff realised last Friday afternoon that the press was investigating whether Mr Ecclestone was a big donor. The subsequent letter from Tom Sawyer, Labour's General Secretary, to Sir Patrick did not reveal the scale of Mr Ecclestone's donation. It was largely to seek approval for what Labour had done. There was no reference to any question of repaying the original pre-election donation.

Sir Patrick did not oblige. He was explicit in saying that Labour should not take a further donation and said that the first should be repaid, even though he did know it

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

was as much as £1 million. He suspected that it might be up to £50,000.

His personal opinion was that "while no criticism can fairly be made of the receipt of the first donation, in the light of the way in which government policy has developed, ministers could well conclude that, in the special circumstances of this case, their freedom of action would, and would be seen to be, enhanced, if the donation were to be returned". He urged that his views should be published. But Labour's media advisers not only failed to mention the possibility of the second donation, which

was discovered first by *The Times*, but also gave a different impression of Sir Patrick's letter.

Tom King, a former Tory minister and member of the Neill committee, argues that the Government misused the committee by seeking advice on an issue which had not yet been studied. The Government only did not provide Sir Patrick with the full facts but also failed to publish the correspondence until last night. However, there was no one else to consult on the propriety of the donations.

Fortunately, Sir Patrick gave sensible advice but he should not be put in such a position again. His committee should now examine the possibility of having a free-standing ethics commissioner to advise on such cases, as

opposed to the role of the Neill committee in advising on changes in rules.

Mr Sawyer's letter raises the serious question: "To what extent are we unable to receive gifts as a party from people in business whose business may at any point come across the desk of Gov-

ernment?" Prompt disclosure of donations will help, but perhaps it is necessary to go further and announce meetings between ministers and substantial donors on government business, as well as when they receive honours or public appointments.

The Government's super-

clean anti-sleaze reputation has been badly tarnished. It has appeared casual in its attitude to donations. Mr Blair clearly believes that he took the right decision, but he needs to realise that proper procedures have to be seen to be followed. The casualness and informality of Opposition

is no longer good enough. The smoothness of the summer transition was deceptive. The inexperience of the Blair team has been exposed. Mr Blair and his advisers have a lot to learn about how to conduct themselves in government.

PETER RIDDELL

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Tourist attractions attacked for costly information lines

By PAUL WHITTAKER

MANY of the best-known tourist attractions are charging customers before they even reach the turnstiles by switching their telephone inquiry lines to 0891 numbers, according to a new guide.

The Good Guide to Britain 1998, published today, says that charging callers up to 50p a minute to provide basic information such as opening times and admission rates was "quite unjustifiable".

Rob Unsworth, the book's associate editor, yesterday criticised the "money-grabbing" tactic which he said was a disturbing new trend. He said this year's survey had identified more than 20 facilities that charged premium rates for telephone information, compared with none last year. "If you ring up only to see whether an attraction is open you could unwittingly

pay more than £2 for a deliberately padded-out message," he said. "It is a blatant rip-off to do this as many of these attractions already charge admission of £5 to £6."

He said it was a pity so few attractions offered 0800 free-phone numbers for information. His guide had deliberately not listed the 0891 numbers, but had given ordinary telephone numbers.

He said the London Tourist Board's recorded information services, listed in the telephone directory, were among the worst offenders. More than 30 premium-rate 0891 numbers were listed, including "Shopping News" and "Changing the Guard". Each call cost 50p a minute.

But the London Tourist Board rejected the criticism. "Providing information to the huge number of visitors to

London, many who arrive out of office hours, is a monumental challenge. We get more than 15,000 calls a month to our service lines which are not designed to make a profit but simply to be self-funding," Louise Wood, its spokeswoman, said.

She added: "Of course, if people want to come down to our tourist information centres, they can get the information for nothing."

Attractions that have introduced premium-rate calls, such as Howlett's and Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks in Kent, have defended the practice. Jeremy Watson, the parks' public relations manager, said: "We are a heavy loss-making charity and looking after animals is an expensive business. I don't believe our message is padded out and we think it is fair value for money."



Angela Eagle, junior Environment Minister, feeding a lemur at London Zoo before announcing the changes

Zoos told they face tougher scrutiny

By JOANNA BAILE

ZOOS will have to meet higher standards under plans announced yesterday by Angela Eagle, a junior Environment Minister. They include better care of animals and improved protection of endangered species.

More emphasis will be put on encouraging zoos to promote conservation, while local authorities will face closer monitoring. A Zoo Forum will oversee the zoo licensing system, which is 20 years old.

Inspections will be made more stringent by encouraging local authorities to use their existing powers to undertake informal, unannounced inspections at least once every year.

The RSPCA, which welcomed the proposals, claims that there are poor standards of facilities, husbandry and management in some zoos.

Which Condition Causes

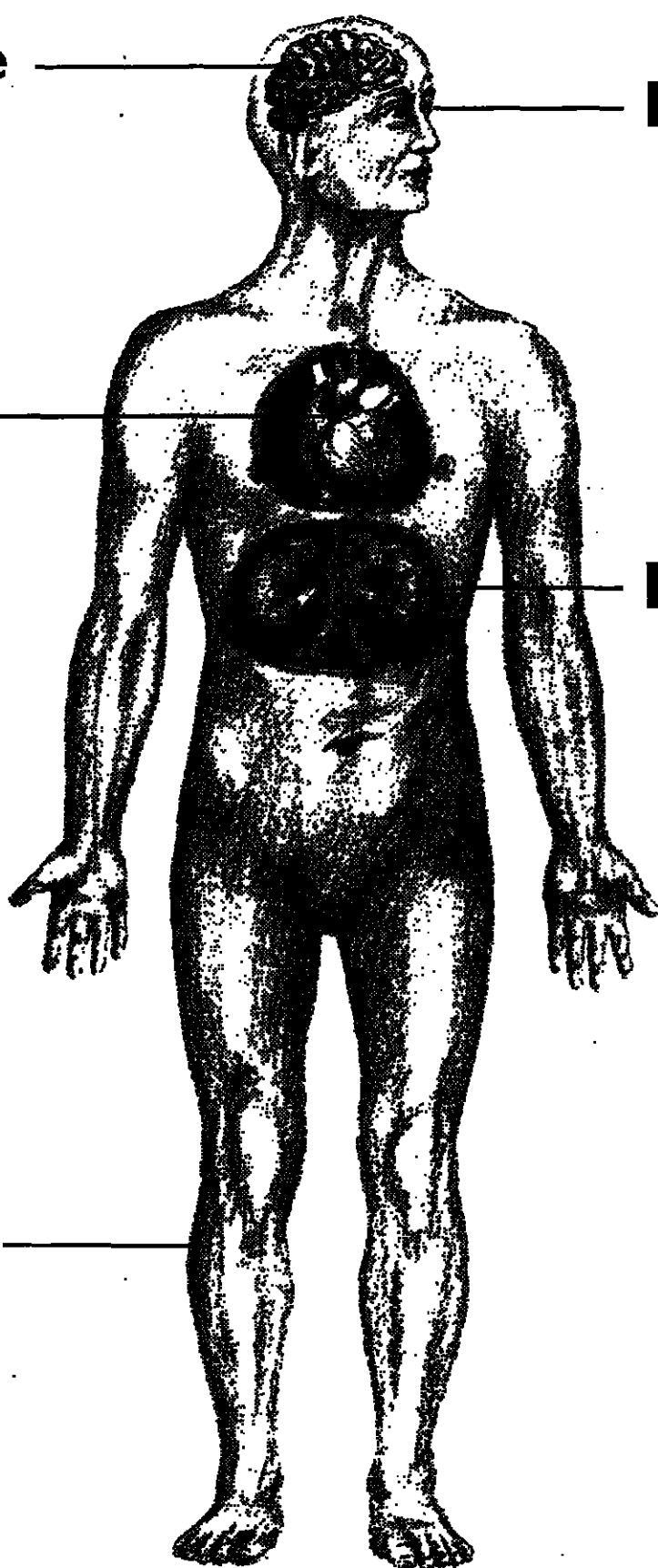
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Answer: Diabetes.

Today is World Diabetes Day. Over 100 million people worldwide have diabetes, with 1.4 million diagnosed in the UK. But it is estimated there may be a million more people in the UK undiagnosed. People with insulin dependent diabetes (type

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How to decode Joyce without being a messer

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE literary curses and brandishments of James Joyce and Roddy Doyle have been collected in the first dictionary of Irish slang.

Flattered, languished, scuttled, mowldy and peloothred are evocative terms used by Irish authors to describe inebriation. When denigrating a character, they resort to bogtrotter, gobshite, muck savage, spa, messer, wagon (women only) and bollix (men only).

The words are among approximately 6,000 terms explained by Bernard Share for his book *Slangage*. "I have found words stretching back to Swift and before, but most are from the modern period because, over the last 50 years, it became more acceptable to put four-letter words in print," Mr Share, a novelist and historian, said.

Goms are fools, cute hoors are devious politicians, and greenhouses are street urinals. The Twelve Apostles were the killing squad recruited by Michael Collins, or The Big Fella, to fight the British in 1920.

All behind like a cow's tail means running very late; spit

oysters is Joyce's term for phlegm, while a Kerry witness is someone who will swear to anything. A piana is a cash register in Dublin while Plastic Paddies are children of first-generation Irish emigrants in Britain.

"Irish colloquialisms are fascinating because they are a mixture of the Irish and English languages," Mr Share said. "People such as Doyle are selling these words to an international audience."

Mr Doyle, the Booker prize-winning novelist, has helped spread Irish slang, such as craic (a good time, usually in a pub) and culchie (country bumpkin). Culchie, which appears in the *Oxford Dictionary*, is an Anglicisation of the term Coillte Mach, the Irish for the village of Kilmagh in Co Mayo. According to Mr Share, the word came into use after the Second World War to describe people from the bogs in central Ireland who went to work in Dublin, home of the Jackeens (Dubliners).

It was hard to imagine that the terms would be widely used in 20 years, he said. "Although I can't imagine cute hoors disappearing."

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THE TIMES FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 1997

Nepal slavery shackles rural folk to poverty

THE village is awake by 5am. Well before dawn the mud-caked streets are filled with men driving the landlord's oxen to the fields and women carrying baskets of dung on their heads.

Older children hold on to their baby brothers and sisters as they watch their parents leave for work while their other siblings drive the goats out to pasture.

It is a scene that is found in rural areas all over the developing world. The difference here, in the Western Terai, is that no one gets paid for working days that start before dawn and continue until after dark.

Nepal's continued use of slaves and bonded labourers is at the top of the agenda at meetings between a European Commission delegation and the Nepalese Government in Kathmandu today. No one is suggesting yet that the European Union might reconsider the £26 million it gives in aid to Nepal every year. But Nepal will be asked to consider introducing laws that would ban its slavery tradition.

After a three-year study of the area, an Anti-Slavery International report on Nepal published today calculates there are more than 200,000



Sue Lloyd-Roberts reports from Nambata, Western Terai, on bonded labour, top of the agenda in EU talks today

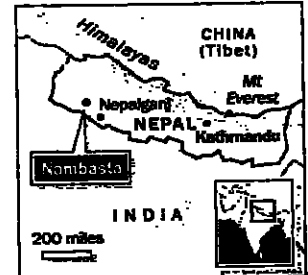
forced labourers in Nepal, found in two distinct categories. There are the *haliya*, literally "one who ploughs" (ploughing is seen as a low-caste activity — indeed a high-caste farmer could risk losing his caste status if he ploughs — and so is unworthy of payment). And there are the *kamaiya*, bonded labourers from the Tharu tribe, whose people have always worked as virtual slaves for Nepali landlords.

"My grandfather used *kamaiya*, and his father before him. It has always been the

way around here," said Badal Prasad Chaudhary, a landlord in the village of Nambata. "You see, we have so much land we couldn't possibly till it all without *kamaiya*." He sat in the courtyard of his house while the wives of his *kamaiya* prepared the vegetables and swept the floors. They are also unpaid.

He invited one of his men, Ram Shengam, to describe his working day. "I don't know how many hours I work because I don't have a watch. All I know is that I work from before light until after dark. I go first to the landlord's house and he tells me which fields to plough and where to feed the animals. In return I am given rice, lentils and mustard. I don't know how much."

Another *kamaiya* in the village, Selgram Tharu, said that he was tied to his landlord twice, by tribal tradition and through debt. When he fell ill with cholera three years ago, he had no alternative but to



Scenes of everyday life in Nambata show, clockwise from the top left, *kamaiya* cattle herders; *kamaiya* wives sifting flour watched by their drunken landlord, Tara Prasad; another slave woman collecting dung; and a *haliya*, or "one who ploughs", considered a low-caste activity

borrow the equivalent of £30 from his landlord to buy medicines. He would probably work for his landlord for life and then pass the legacy of debt to his son.

His landlord, Tara Prasad, was quite drunk when he agreed to be interviewed. "If you give them money, they spend it on alcohol. If you give them rice, at least they might

feed their family." The Terai is the only slither of non-mountainous land in Nepal and it provides most of the country's agricultural needs.

Until the 1960s it was a high-risk area for malaria and so cut off from the rest of the world. Anthropologists who first visited the Western Terai 40 years ago were astonished by the medieval social and

working structures. "We had no real experience of democracy in Nepal until 1991," said Shisham Mishra, of the Bonded Labour Liberation Front in Nepal. "There is no tradition here of listening to the people. And most of the politicians themselves have land on which they employ *kamaiya*."

At the Ministry of Labour in

the capital, Nepalganj, Bahkra Bilas Bhusal said the Government was talking about tackling the problem with a programme that would involve the state paying back the loans which enslave the people. But the problem of bonded labour was not a priority. Slavery in Nepal was a shameful thing for Nepal, and for humanity as a whole.

"The donor countries are prepared to help out on other projects... They should help us with this as well."

But outsiders have been arguing that the Nepalese Government should make an initially helpful gesture, such as legislating against slavery. Sue Lloyd-Roberts will report from Nepal for the BBC Nine O'Clock News tonight.

Clinton lawyers question Paula Jones

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

LAWYERS for President Clinton have questioned Paula Jones under oath for the first time about her sexual harassment lawsuit against him.

She was questioned for eight hours on Wednesday and the questioning continued yesterday at a law office in Little Rock, Arkansas, only a few blocks from the hotel where Mrs Jones alleges Mr Clinton exposed himself and asked her for oral sex in 1991. The President adamantly denies the claim.

The questioning was part of the pre-

trial process of gathering depositions. Lawyers are given wide scope to explore areas that the judge may later rule inadmissible at the trial, which is due to start on May 27.

Susan Carpenter-McMillan, spokeswoman for Mrs Jones, said she expected that Mr Clinton's chief lawyer, Robert Bennett, would be unrelenting in his questions. Sometimes lawyers are deliberately aggressive at the deposition stage in the hope of giving plaintiffs second thoughts about pursuing a case all the way to a public trial.

Lawyers from both sides have been taking depositions for several weeks.

Among those they still plan to question is Jennifer Flowers, whose claims to have had a 12-year affair with Mr Clinton briefly threatened his initial bid for the White House in 1992.

Meanwhile, two conservative advocacy groups have been attempting to air extraordinary commercials in Washington encouraging women to call a toll-free number if they believe they have been a victim of sexual harassment by the President. The Free Congress Foundation and the National Centre for Public Policy Research claimed to have received thousands of calls but none that were an authentic complaint against Mr Clinton.

New warning on drought

Sydney: Drought threatening millions of people in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea shows no signs of easing, an Australian parliamentary committee was told yesterday (Roger Maynard writes).

The failure of monsoon rains, blamed on El Niño, the weather phenomenon, will worsen the situation, Australia's national relief agency, said. Australia spends £2 million a month on drought aid for Papua New Guinea.

Japanese link to child sex ring

FROM ROBERT WHYMAN
IN TOKYO

THE uncovering of an international sex ring trading in Asian children has spotlighted Japan's extraordinary tolerance of the trade in child sex.

Italian authorities who arrested a Japanese man and a Chinese woman trying to smuggle a 12-year-old Chinese girl to Miami via Milan said the sex ring was run by Chinese criminal gangs and Japanese mobsters. The ab-

sence of effective laws to deal with sexual abuse of children has made Japan a paradise for paedophiles.

Child prostitution is widespread in Japan under the euphemism *enjo kosai* (compensated dating), referring to the practice of schoolgirls providing sex to adult men to earn money for expensive imported clothes or handbags.

A group of MPs is sponsoring a Bill aiming at making soliciting or procuring child prostitutes a criminal offence.

The law would apply to adults who pay for sex with children under the age of 18. If enacted, this would be the first law to cover sexual abuse of children inside and outside Japan.

Sponsors of the Bill hope to penalise organisers of package tours for paedophiles to countries where sex can be bought cheaply. But there is little optimism the police will be able to stamp out the involvement of powerful *yakuza* gangsters in child prostitution rackets.



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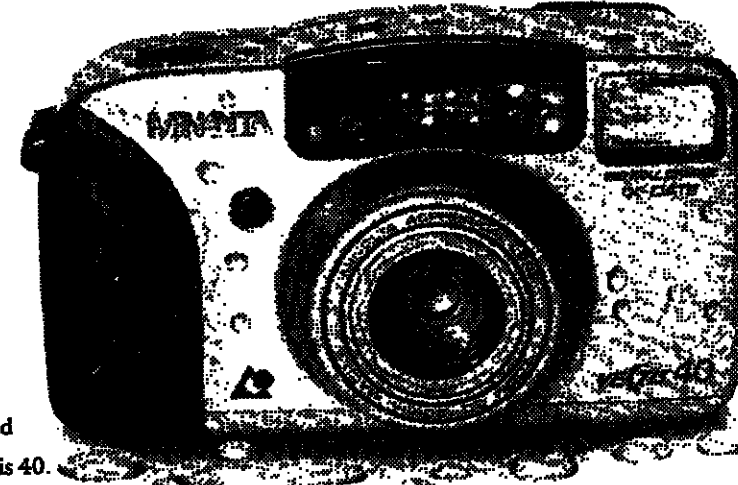
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مركز من روكلي

Britain vies for oil billions in Caspian boom

PRESIDENT ALIYEV of Azerbaijan dipped his fingers into a pot of newly extracted crude oil, smeared the gooey liquid over his face and declared that the ancient custom would bring his impoverished nation good fortune and wealth.

In a ceremony which politicians and oilmen from around the world hailed as the start of a new Caspian Sea oil boom, Azerbaijan this week officially began pumping ashore the first of billions of barrels of oil.

"We are on the eve of a very great and prosperous future," Mr Aliyev said in Baku. "We have laid down the foundations for that future today."

His remarks were echoed by an impressive range of dignitaries from around the world. They have been courting Baku in the hope of winning some of the lucrative oil and pipeline contracts for the estimated 200 billion barrels lying in the Caspian basin, which should guarantee prosperity for the region for many years.

British, American, Russian and Turkish ministers lobbied hard in the hope that their companies would be able to establish the sort of presence in the country that they have enjoyed in oil-rich regions such as the Gulf.

"With the turn of a valve, Azerbaijan has opened more than a pipeline, Azerbaijan



Richard Beeston reports from Baku on the scramble for business in Azerbaijan

has opened a new era of prosperity," Federico Pena, the visiting US Energy Secretary, said. "This is an important milestone and a symbol for the future."

Derek Fatchett, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, who in keeping with local custom was obliged to smear oil over his face as well, said that Britain was well positioned to take advantage of the forthcoming boom. The point was emphasised when he extended an invitation from the Prime Minister to Mr Aliyev to visit London next year and delivered a letter of congratulation from the Queen.

The Azerbaijan International Operating Company, the BP-led consortium that developed the first offshore field, has been praised widely for building a pipeline, platform and terminal in only three years. "There is potential here and we have established our-

selves as good and trusted players," Mr Fatchett said.

Certainly even a brief inspection of Baku revealed that the capital is undergoing extraordinary changes. When the Soviet Union collapsed six years ago the city was an impoverished backwater. Today modern hotels and blocks of flats are being built at a record pace alongside lavish casinos, clothes shops and Western restaurants.

Nevertheless, the talk of new-found wealth and the prospect of oil money flooding into the economy may be premature. Many say that Azerbaijan still faces tough obstacles.

"This nation would be perfect if we could pick it up and put it somewhere else," a Western diplomat said, bemoaning Azerbaijan's unpredictable neighbours and the volatility of the Caucasus region.



The evil sorcerer Rasputin finds himself falling apart in front of his aide, Bartok the bat, in the new Twentieth Century Fox film *Anastasia*

Fox takes bite at Disney's golden goose

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

IT IS hardly the stuff of Thanksgiving family entertainment. Days before America's autumn break, two studios are at war over a \$55 million (£33 million) cartoon feature film set against a backdrop of the Russian Revolution.

In an all-out attempt to break Disney's stranglehold on large-scale animation, Twentieth Century Fox is reportedly spending up to \$50 million on top of production costs to promote its unlikely epic, *Anastasia* — a third more than the cost of marketing last year's blockbuster, *Independence Day*.

In reply, the Walt Disney Company, maker of *Aladdin* and *The Lion King*, is defending its grip on the most lucrative niche in the film business with "every legal means possible", according to a major cinema chain.

As Fox launches its final advertising blitz, Disney has banned *Anastasia* commercials from some of its ABC television programmes and re-released its 1989 hit, *The Little Mermaid*. Reports have even emerged of toy shop staff pushing *Anastasia* dolls to the back of their shelves.

Twentieth Century Fox, whose proprietor, Rupert Murdoch — chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of The

Times — was among several studios dazzled by the staggering profits generated in recent years by Disney animated films, and determined to enter the specialised market with its potential for millions in revenue from toys and video sales. Animated films also benefit from not having to pay multimillion-dollar salaries to "real" stars.

Non-Disney feature-length cartoons have generally flopped, however. *The Lion King* has made more than \$1 billion worldwide since its 1994 release, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* a healthy \$500 million. One of the best efforts by other studios, Warner Brothers' *Space Jam* (\$90 million), included the real presence of the basketball star

Michael Jordan. Experts fear America's appetite for full-length animation may have peaked. This year's Disney release, *Hercules*, took a relatively modest \$97 million.

Anastasia's central character is a plucky ex-Tsarina described by *Fortune* as a cross between Meg Ryan, whose voice she has, and Audrey Hepburn. The film is aimed chiefly at girls and their mothers, all being wooed with 50 tie-in book titles and a \$30 million advertising campaign.

As the tumult in "Toon Town" rages, one group is sure to benefit. Young artists are being recruited straight from art school at \$180,000 a year — three times the rate three years ago.

Terrorism ruled out in TWA crash

Washington: The FBI has ended its investigation into the explosion and crash of TWA Flight 800 in July last year, saying it had found "absolutely no evidence" of a criminal act (see Brodie wires).

Letters have been sent to relatives of the 230 passengers and crew telling them of the decision which will be officially announced next week.

A separate investigation into whether mechanical failure caused the explosion will be continued by the US National Transportation Safety Board. Its latest theory is focused on whether frayed wires or a surge of electricity were responsible for creating sparks that may have ignited fumes in the centre fuel tank of the Boeing 747.

After the crash, there was widespread speculation that the aircraft may have been brought down off Long Island by a terrorist bomb or missile after taking off from John F. Kennedy airport for Paris.

US herds 'carrying mad cow disease'

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN NEW YORK

THOUSANDS of American cattle carry a deadly strain of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow" disease, according to a new book.

John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, co-authors of *Mad Cow USA: Could the Nightmare Happen Here?*, said there has been evidence since 1985 of a strain of BSE in US cattle, but American regulators have played down the dangers and erred on the side of the meat industry.

The book contends that although the strain of BSE linked to the fatal Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) in people is specific to Europe, other fatal strains are present in North America.

These strains of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) were first detected in studies in the 1980s at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, by Dr Richard Marsh, a virologist who died

earlier this year of causes unrelated to the subject of his research.

Dr Marsh, who grew up on his father's milk farm in Oregon, found a strain of TSE in farmed milk which had been given feed containing meat from "Downer" dairy cows. He then injected the virus found in the milk into Holstein bull calves, discovering that the calves caught the disease rapidly and died. He was not certain how the cows fed to the milk got the disease in the first place, but concluded that rendered ruminants in feed were the likeliest source.

Dr Marsh's findings — and his call for a ban on using material from ruminants in cattle feed — were dismissed by the federal Food and Drug Administration.

While there have been no reported cases of CJD in America, the authors argue that this does not mean that there is no risk.

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Mining boss says 'we did not profit from apartheid'

FROM SAM KILEY IN JOHANNESBURG

SHOWING the political skills used by his mining dynasty to prosper under apartheid and in a democratic South Africa, Nicky Oppenheimer yesterday joined fellow Anglo American and De Beers executives in an apology for having worked with a racist regime. But he rejected suggestions that the corporation built by his father and grandfather had supported National Party policies, or that South Africa's biggest company had profited from anti-union legislation and cheap labour.

Mr Oppenheimer, deputy chairman of Anglo and the chairman-elect of De Beers, told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up to examine amnesty applications for political crimes between 1960 and 1994, that apartheid had been a "massive affirmative action programme for whites". "It is quite clear that we at Anglo did not do what we could, and should have, to

undermine [apartheid]. We must express our apologies and remorse."

According to some analysts, Anglo American and associated companies controlled by the Oppenheimer family total up to 52 per cent of the companies listed on Johannesburg's Stock Exchange. Most were built in the apartheid years.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) had earlier named Anglo as a corporation that had "abused workers' rights" by failing to ensure miners were protected from asbestos and silicosis, which have killed hundreds of employees. "The policies of corporations like Anglo with regard to dust in mines amounts to a human rights abuse. Their attitude was that, if someone's lungs packed up, he would be sent home with a lump sum of 200 to 300 rand (£24-£40) and the industry would hire someone else,"

said Sam Shilowa, Cosatu's general secretary.

Mr Oppenheimer said his father, Harry, had had no contact for 13 years of his chairmanship of Anglo with the then South African Prime Minister, John Vorster. "Anglo American stood out during these times and was looked at by the National Party [Government] as far from friendly," he said.

According to an academic study quoted by Cosatu, "in 1993, out of every 100,000 gold miners, 113 died in accidents, 2,000 suffered from a reportable injury, 1,100 developed tuberculosis, and of these 25 died in 1990, about 300 were certified as having silicosis."

In testimony to the commission, other business leaders, including Johann Rupert, head of the Rembrandt cigarette manufacturing corporation, condemned apartheid and insisted that the system held back economic growth.

Caesar's summer palace found at Naples

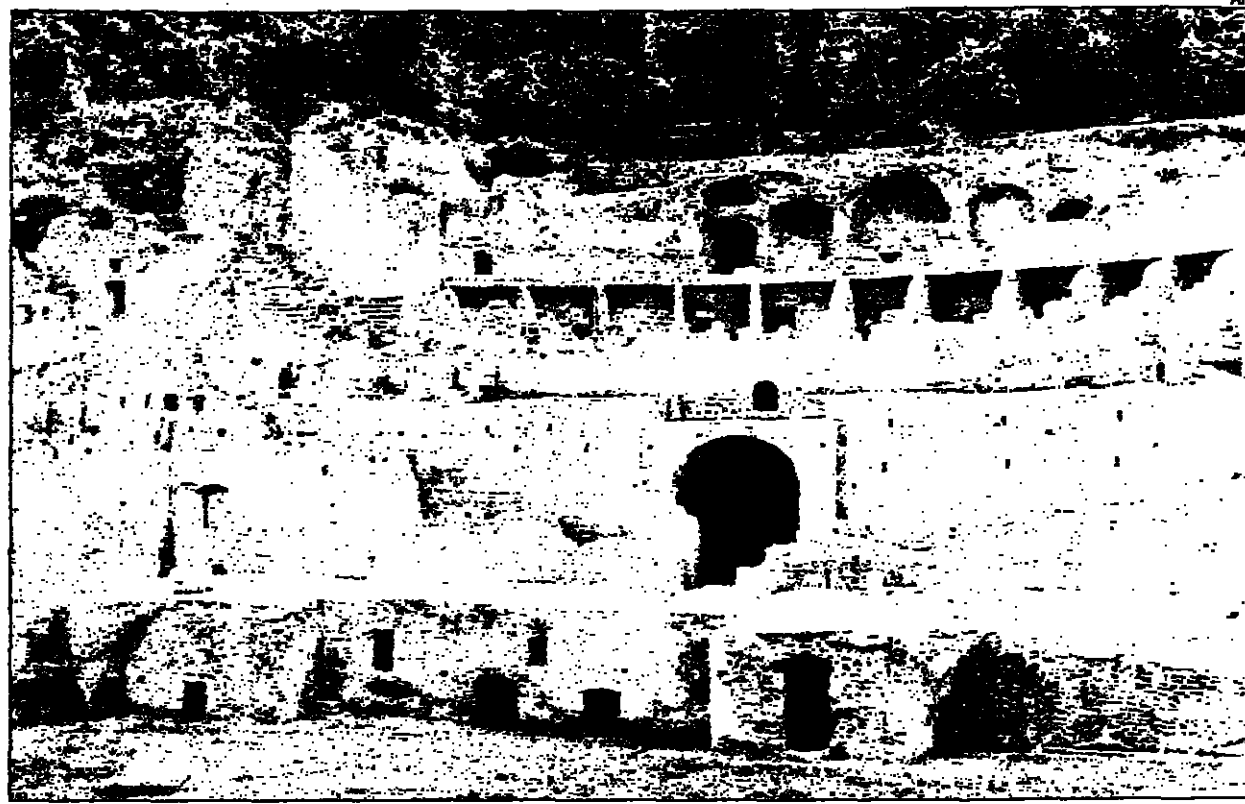
FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

EVERY schoolboy ought to know that Julius Caesar wintered in Gaul, but we now know where he spent his summer holidays. Archaeologists have discovered what they believe to be the seaside villa of Julius Caesar, overlooking the Bay of Naples on what the ancient Romans called the "Golden Shore".

Professor Stefano De Caro, Superintendent of Archaeology for Naples, said teams working at Baia, on the coast west of Naples, had uncovered a "vast complex" built of volcanic rock at the top of the cliffs overlooking the sea.

"There can be little doubt that this was Caesar's villa," he said. "Its date, its sheer size, and its superb panoramic position mean it can only have been Julius Caesar's own residence."

It matches the description



Ruins of a bathing complex at Baia, the exclusive resort of Roman emperors, overlooking the Bay of Naples

of Julius Caesar's Naples residence given by Tacitus, who records in his *Annals* that it was "placed at the point from which one can enjoy the widest panorama of the bay".

The cliffs above the Bay of Naples at Baia were much favoured by the patricians of early imperial Rome, to the

point where the area (now in the rundown suburb of Pozzuoli, birthplace of Sophia Loren) became the centre of the *dolce vita* of the time.

A list of those who retreated to luxury villas there reads like a who's who of late republican and early imperial Rome, including Tiberius,

Nero, Cicero, Pompey and the dictator Sulla. The area was described by Cicero as "the Golden Shore, the Bay of Luxury". The poet Propertius records his jealousy when he learnt that his beloved, Cynthia, had gone to Baia, whose beaches were "known to be fatal to female virtue".

Archaeologists working at Baia, part of the volcanic region mythologised by Homer and Virgil as the Elysian Fields, have dated the beginnings of the newly found villa to the 3rd century BC, the period when Rome extended its power throughout the Mediterranean.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Chinese expected to free rights activists

Beijing: James Sasser, the American Ambassador to China, hinted yesterday that he expected China to release key human rights activists in the wake of President Jiang Zemin's visit to Washington (James Pringle writes). He was not aware of any specific pledge to free jailed human rights activists, but "based on intuition" he expected to see progress in the next few weeks.

Analysts said that those about to be released, besides Wei Jingsheng, the country's most high-profile prisoner, who has spent nearly 17 years in jail for calling for the "fifth modernisation — democracy", could include Wang Dan, the Tiananmen student leader. Both are said to have suffered health problems, with Wei's health deteriorating dramatically.

Talks to start on peace pact

Tokyo: Yevgeni Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, and his Japanese counterpart, Keizo Obuchi, agreed to start talks aimed at signing a Second World War peace treaty by 2000, following a summit accord earlier this month. Japanese Foreign Ministry officials said Mr Primakov and Mr Obuchi agreed that the talks will start at the vice-ministerial level, with a Japanese official visiting Moscow in January. The two countries have not signed a Second World War peace treaty because of a long-standing dispute over the Russian-held Kurile Islands, northeast of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost main island. (Reuters)

French boats attack Belgians

Brussels: French fishermen hurled rocks and fired flares at a Belgian trawler found inside France's 12-mile limit, smashing her windows. Nets were thrown over the boat's propeller, the Belgian fishing boat owners' association said. There were no injuries and there will be an investigation into the incident, in the Channel 14 miles southwest of Dunkirk and said by the association to have involved about 15 French boats. Negotiations were under way to let the trawler dock in Belgium. (Reuters)

Case opens on pilots' deaths

Miami: Lawyers here are seeking damages from the Cuban Government for the deaths of three Cuban-American pilots shot down last year off the coast of Cuba (David Adams writes). The case is the first of its kind to be brought under a new American anti-terrorism law. No Cuban officials or lawyers were present and Havana refuses to recognise US authority to judge the case, which is being brought by the victims' families.

Trabant passes 'moose test'

Bonn: The Trabant, the two-stroke East German car with 1950s technology, has passed with flying colours the "moose avoidance test" failed by the new A-class Mercedes-Benz model. The *Thüringer Allgemeine Zeitung* newspaper claimed that the test it carried out at an abandoned Soviet airstrip in the eastern town of Eisenach showed the Trabant was safer than the "Baby Benz" even at higher speeds. (Reuters) Letters, page 23

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BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

But frantic Western efforts are now being made in Arab capitals to persuade governments that the threat posed by Saddam has nothing to do with the Arab-Israeli peace

‘The support America had for the liberation of Kuwait has virtually disappeared’

King Hussein of Jordan has

Egypt and Syria have urged Baghdad to avoid a military confrontation with America. Newspapers are saying that an attack on Iraq would be tantamount to an attack on the whole Arab nation.



By Christopher Walker

ARAB states from the Atlantic to the Gulf, together with the leadership of the 22-member Arab League, are boycotting the fourth annual Middle East and North Africa economic conference due to open in the Gulf state of Qatar on Sunday.

ARABS

foot-dragging by Israel in the peace process since Binyamin Netanyahu took power in Israel last year, is a diplomatic blow to the United States. America will be represented at the conference by Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, but a whistle-stop tour by one of her officials to persuade

Describing what is fast turning into a diplomatic debacle, the Tel Aviv paper *Haaretz* said yesterday that the conference, which was launched with a flourish in Morocco four years ago, "has been transformed from a celebration of Israel's normalisation with the

David Levy, the Israeli Foreign Minister, announced he would not attend the meeting, but send Natan Sharansky, the Trade Minister.

BY MICHAEL BINYON
AND CHRISTOPHER WALKER

The same tough line was taken by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, over lunch. He said that Britain understood Israel's security worries,

NETANYAHU IN LONDON

He will today have similar talks in London with Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, before going to America. She is also likely to take a tough line on settlements and Israel's approach to the peace process, and President Clinton, signalling

Anger inside Mr Netanyahu's Likud party resulted from an ill-tempered convention at which the Prime Minister and his close aides were accused of political trickery in tightening his grip over the party.

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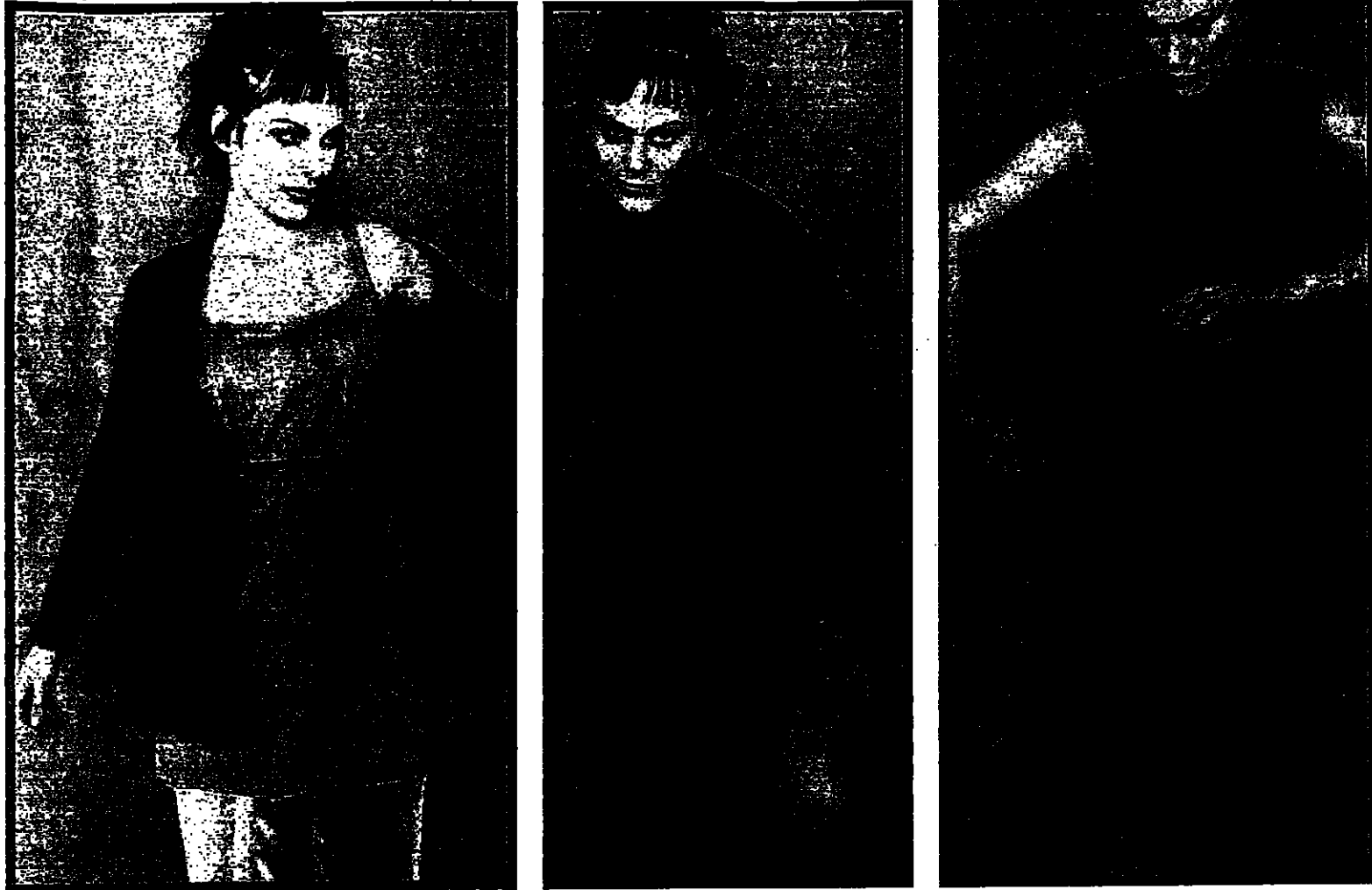
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THE SUNDAY

The layering game

You've got the dress, the trousers and the tunic. Now wear them all at once, says Style Editor **Grace Bradberry**



Left: Trousers, £175 and minidress, £140, by Miu Miu. Cardigan, £403 by Alberta Ferretti. All from Harvey Nichols. Middle: Trousers, £59.95 by Blba. Polo neck, £54 by Jigsaw. Skirt, £30 by Warehouse. Velvet slingbacks, £225 by Ernesto Esposito at Russell & Bromley. Right: Pinstripe dress, £335 by Junya Watanabe. Trousers, £119 by Joseph at Liberty's

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Brocade trousers, £239. Giltier polo neck, £165. Camisole and tie tunic, £465. All by Dries Van Noten at Liberty's

Dressing in layers is scarcely a foreign concept for Englishwomen. After all, didn't we give the world the twinset, a chic twist on wearing two woollies at once? But layering, as it is practised on the catwalk for this season will be rather foreign to most people. Dries Van Noten, Belgium's most successful designer, is the leading proponent of the look.

He collects richly patterned fabrics and textured knits from around the world. The pieces he creates are individually desirable, but beg to be bought together. Once you have succumbed to the brocade trousers, the cashmere tank with chiffon wrap dress attached becomes a must. And so it goes on, until you have a whole wardrobe of Dries — all of which can be worn at once.

It's not only decorative designers who have caught the layering bug, however. Junya Watanabe, the avant garde Japanese designer, combines dresses with trousers in such a skilful way that it doesn't seem odd at all.

The Austrian Helmut Lang and Hussein Chalayan, the most intellectual of Britain's young guns, have done clever things with flaps, attaching them to the front and back of trousers — great for women who have failed to come to terms with their backsides.

Other designers have used the skirt over trousers idea as a neat way to make this season's micro-minis more accessible. Miu Miu, the Prada diffusion line, showed the shortest of short skirts and dresses — but the tunic designs can be slipped over slim-leg velvet trousers.

The key is to eliminate bulk. Trousers must have no pleats, no bulging pockets, no creases. The more you play with different textures, the more successful the look will be.



Photographer: ALEX SARGINSON
Stylist: Deborah Brett
Hair: Raphael at Michaeljohn Management
Make-up: Jochen Fuchs
Model: Annica at Select

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The dark world of Iain Banks

MURDO MACLEOD / SPOONER

Iain Banks refuses to play the literary game, yet his novels about the dark side of humanity are bestsellers.

Interview by Robin Eggar

Some way between his seventh and eight pint of bitter, having already discussed the inherent weaknesses in the Glasgow Rangers back four, Iain Banks confesses his addiction to the computer game *Civilisation 2*. And how, when his wife comes in and he is busy playing it, he tries to pretend he is busy writing. But despite all this beer and male bonhomie, Iain Banks is a New Bloke — part politically correct anorak, part retarded adolescent. He won't laugh if someone tells an off-colour joke about women or ethnic minorities. Or if he does, it is in spite of himself and he will immediately apologise. And he is also Scotland's best-selling — and arguably best — novelist.

We met in the Hawes Inn, right underneath the Forth Rail Bridge in North Queensferry, Fife, to watch a screening of *The Strange World of Iain Banks*, a *South Bank Show* devoted to him which will be screened on Sunday. The Inn is world-famous because Robert Louis Stevenson used to drink there. Many regard Banks as Stevenson's heir.

"I am totally flattered by comparisons with Robert Louis," he says. "I've never come up with any archetype as stunning as his — and he came up with two, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and *Treasure Island*."

Banks exploded on to the literary scene in 1984 with publication of *The Wasp Factory*, the story of a 16-year-old boy who delights in torturing animals and, occasionally, killing people. It was an instant bestseller. Short, powerful, technically accomplished and full of gruesome scenes and descriptions of appalling abuse, it divided critics. Earlier this year, the novel appeared at number 31 in Waterstone's "Top 100 Books of the Century" — just behind Nabokov's *Invitation to a Beheading*, but ahead of Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*.

Torture and murder are described in detail

In the 13 years since *The Wasp Factory*, Banks has written 16 books, alternating mainstream novels with seven science fiction romps. Always a good seller, his sales redoubled after BBC2 adapted *The Crow Road* in 1996. His latest hardback, *A Song of Stone*, has already sold more than 50,000 copies since it was published this summer.

Banks lives in North Queensferry, not far from where he was born in 1954. His father was a naval officer, his mother an ice skater. An only child, Iain was always reading. His earliest influences, he says, came from television, comics and science fiction.

After school he went to Stirling University to study literature with psychology and philosophy, and spent most of his time there, he says, "writing in my room".

He only ever wanted to be a novelist, and for nearly ten years after graduating worked in a series of part-time jobs.

Three science fiction novels were rejected by publishers before Macmillan accepted *The Wasp Factory*.

Banks was living in Kent at the time of his initial success, but returned to Fife with his Anglo-German wife, Annie. She hasn't read any of his books since her warning her that the bestselling *Complicity* was "too violent". They have no children. Banks suspects that if they did, it might dilute his childlike relish for exploring the dark side of humanity. "I'm sure I'd be a lot more mature, sensible, steady," he reflects. "But I love children. I go hopelessly gooey over little babies."

The making of a *South Bank Show* appears to confirm his status as a cultural icon, yet he does not see himself as part of the literary scene. Although he was chosen as one of the Best of Young British Novelists in 1993, he has never made the Booker shortlist. Perhaps it is because he won't play the literary game. He would rather sink pints with his old school friends and fellow sci-fi author Ken MacLeod than hang around the Groucho Club. He never writes book reviews or learned articles, and is scathing about most contemporary novelists.

"The assumption that one is too intellectually well developed to want to be bothered with plot or story really p****s



Iain Banks: "There aren't enough people trying to write the stuff I try to write without being popular. To surrender the idea of a decent plot to the likes of Jeffrey Archer is moral suicide"

me off," he snaps. "I like plot. I like story. There aren't enough people trying to write the stuff I try to write without being remorselessly popular and pandering to the lowest common denominator. To surrender the idea of a decent plot to the likes of Jeffrey Archer is moral suicide."

"But I want to be clever with it. I want to do the twiddly bits, the cunning stuff that has hidden meanings. I want to impress people with the size of my O levels. I finely work my books, and construct them so that it should be possible and rewarding to read them again, and get more out of it."

Although most of his mainstream novels are set either in Scotland or in distorted visions of its landscapes, Banks insists he is not a "Scottish writer". He is a writer who is a Scot and proud of it. He admits that when he was nine he announced to his shocked mother that he felt more British than Scottish. Today the reverse is true. He is an old-fashioned socialist, forced

by distaste for the former Conservative administration into nationalism.

"After Thatcher came to power I felt alienated and a lot more Scottish," he says. "I don't think many people of my generation will ever feel British again."

Banks makes a strong distinction between his mainstream and his science fiction novels, which he writes under the name Iain M. Banks. Science fiction was his first love, and is still where he feels happiest. Several feature "The Culture", a Utopia where machines and human beings live in harmony, while others are extremely funny space operas. Perversely, while in his mainstream novels suffering is manifest and the writing is tight, his science fiction is optimistic and a trifle self-indulgent.

The mainstream novels he divides into "nice" and "grim". Even in the "nice" books (*The Crow Road*, *Whif*), the satire is

black — grandmothers explode, friends betray each other. In the "grim" fiction (*Wasp Factory*, *Complicity*), torture, perversion and murder are described with a graphic, precise attention to detail.

"I don't know where it comes from," admits Banks. "Maybe it is some kind of cathartic thing, or an insurance policy — once you have imagined it, it can't happen in reality to you. When I write the scenes it is a technical exercise. My emotional self is saying 'this is an awful, terrible, obscene thing', but as far as I am concerned it is happening in the reality of the book, and therefore it has to be described as well as possible. The role of a novelist should be never to compromise."

If there are two Iain Bankses on the page, off it there is only really one. He enjoys his image as a "slacker". His working routine is simple. He starts work on a book in October and finishes it by Christmas, writing 3,000

words a day, five days a week. Then he thinks about it for a month while the editor reads his first draft. Another week of intense writing and it is done. For the next six months he thinks about the next book ... and has fun.

This is the Banks who likes downing pints in the pub, who happily admits to being a big kid, who goes to science fiction conventions, who studies maps and marks all the roads he has driven in Scotland with different coloured pencils. His greatest indulgence is driving fast, buying too many CDs and playing computer games. He is thinking about taking flying lessons.

What Banks seems to have achieved is a perfect balance between his inner and outer life. When he goes outside, he is just another bloke. When he writes, he constantly walks to the edge of the precipice. Then he jumps off — and is continually surprised to see that his audience has followed him.

• The Strange World of Iain Banks, ITV 10.50pm, November 16

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Has Labour sold its soul for a Bernie?

John Lloyd on the need to redefine the moral boundaries of politics

The acceptance, and disguise of acceptance, of £1 million from Bernie Ecclestone, coupled with the decision to exempt Formula One from the tobacco advertising ban, is Labour's first real crisis. It is real because it is deep — not just for the party, but for the Government and for democratic governance. It resides both within the party's procedures and culture, but more seriously it lies outside both, in the moral and moralising over which it, like all parties and governments, seems to have little control.

The party crisis can and will be weathered. Nothing points to an underlying failure of Labour in the country. William Hague is looking increasingly less like a boy doing a man's job — but he is still plodding through the foothills.

Yet I have heard more cynicism on this affair from within the party and the Government than on any other issue. One insider said that from now on all large donations would be called "Bernies", another that the policy with which he would be concerned could fail because nobody had put up enough money to see it through. Both were jokes; but with a bitter edge, a presumption of "us" who carry on representing the people or working in government, ranked against "them" in the inner circle who see Bernie Ecclestone.

New Labour has an image crisis. It was presented to the electorate as the party of openness, honesty and transparency, confronting a Conservative Government whose sleaziness had made it incapable of inspiring the people. It mobilised sarcasm, revelation and, above all, moral outrage. Its promise was to squeeze sleaze out of public life; it recognised a lack of trust in politicians and promised to rebuild it, bit by bit.

Now it has been shown to be evasive on facts, grudgingly conceding information only under pressure and threatening towards those who pressed for an honest account. This was the kind of reaction we had come to expect from the Tories.

Labour can rightly claim that it moved rapidly to review the underlying situation of which the "Bernie" was an instance, but that is because it knows much better than did the last Government how to limit damage, not because it is more moral.

I do not believe Tony Blair exempted Formula One racing from the tobacco advertising ban because his party got a "Bernie"; I did not believe that John Major, when Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1989, relieved foreigners of paying tax in this country because some of the wealthier among them were large donors to the Tory party. The Labour Party at the time said the affair stank, and they were right. It stank not because of Major's moral bone fides, but because there must have been a corner of his mind which was forever money — as there must also be with Tony Blair.

A study done in the University of Southern California has shown that senators were swayed by donors' interests on 25 per cent of their votes.

"Swayed by" does not mean obeying the dictates of the moneybags. It means that a little donor prompt bleeps from time to time. That is what they pay for, and that is — of course — what they get.

Labour's reputation thus suffers. This means, in turn, that the Government's stock of trust and momentum drains away a little. Tony Blair did not just ask for the public's trust on moral grounds; he asked for it because he wants to dedicate his Government to large tasks which he believes the Tories left undone — and which clearly, towards the end, they were indeed unable to undertake with real energy.

Tony Blair and Gordon Brown clearly see that mechanisms, institutions and political culture must be reshaped to provide the economic and social infrastructure for a step change in the economy — the change from production to intellectual corporations. They must cope with the unremitting pressure from global competition and the rapidly growing expectations of both the workforce and the out-of-workforce.

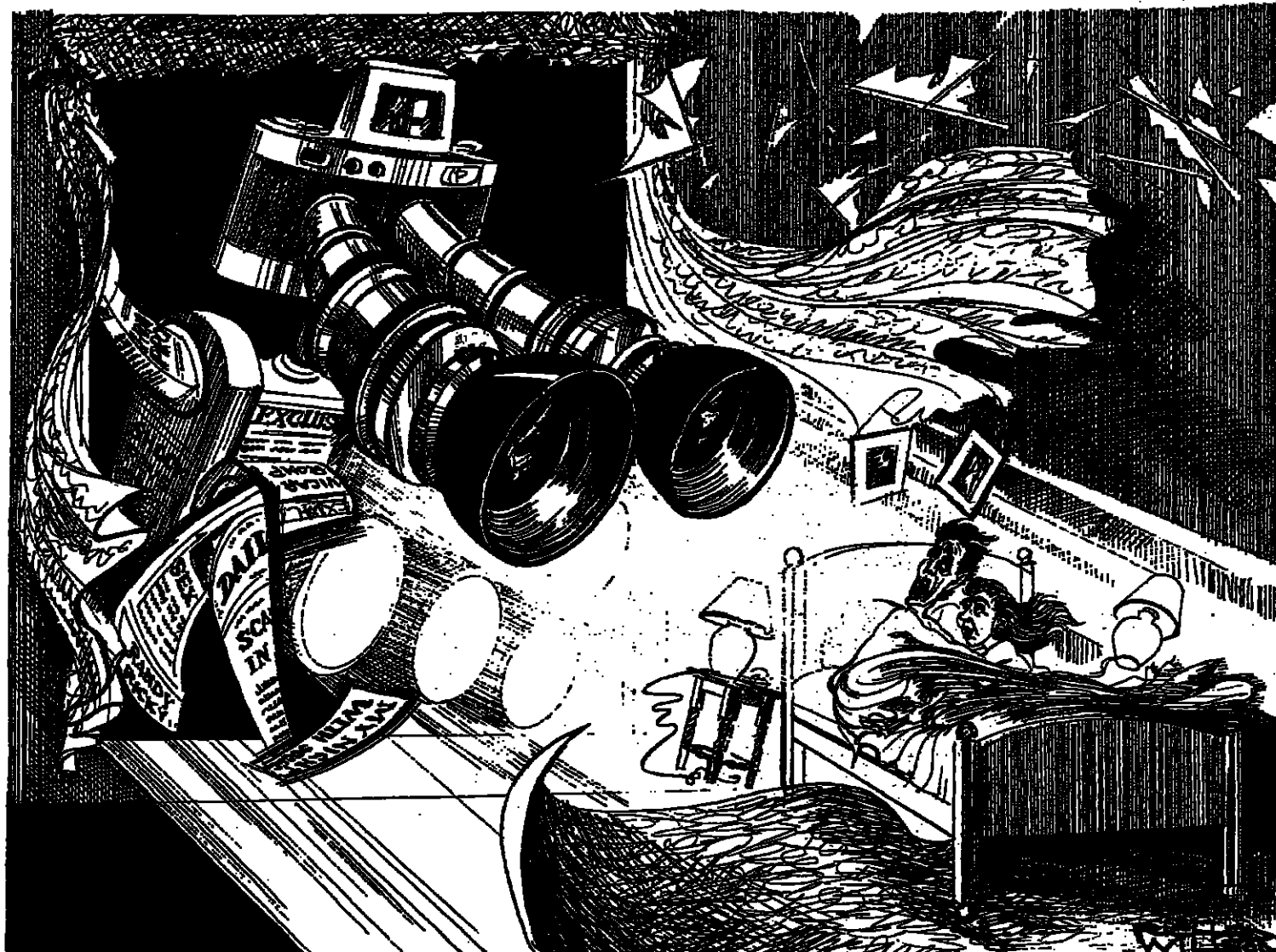
Mr Blair is right; hard decisions have to be taken so that we can live with such change. Many of these decisions will be in a direction we know well from the past two decades — that of detaching the citizen from the State, giving him or her increasing responsibility for providing for life's large events, accidents and tragedies. No one proposes any coherent other way. But this transition, alarming to millions, can be undertaken only by an Administration which enjoys a high reputation with the majority.

Democracy, finally, suffers from this, not because Labour is irredeemably sleazy, but because it shows itself unable, or unwilling, to take on the pressures which confront it.

Politics is increasingly theatre. It is a spectacle designed for media attention. This is expensive both to mount and to maintain. The number of the very wealthy rises rapidly; some among them are individuals who wish to be active politically, not only for public-spirited reasons but because they want advantage for their corporations. New Labour's very success in presenting itself as a non-ideological machine as worthy of business support as are the Conservatives means there is now a straight competition for corporate and millionaires' cash — which gives the latter choice, and tempts party leaders to offer a little more than the other guy.

Labour did not invent these trends. It spotted them, went with them, has benefited from them. Now it sees the seamier side. It is suffering from having exposed itself. To combat that, and to regain trust, it must strive to be an island of modesty and probity in a sea of leaping affluence and blurred moral boundaries. A tough task, for a party which has just learnt to enjoy high-rolling. But necessary, if its high aims are to rest on continued public support.

The author is associate editor of the New Statesman.



Feasting on heartbreak

When the tabloids are on the scent of scandal, nobody is left unhurt

This is a tale of five women. Each has stood within inches of the line of fire of the British media. None herself sought fame. All have been through hell. All are now forgotten. All are still alive. Two are silent, three speak. I have met and talked to these three over the past few months.

For BBC Radio 5 Live I have been making a series, *The Politician, the Actress and the Bishop*, now being broadcast. My subject is the scandals industry. Our focus has been not to rehash the scandals, but to investigate the process by which they became famous. How is behaviour which among most of our countrymen would be regarded as commonplace, if wrong, turned into a national sensation?

The inquiry has been intriguing in many ways: but what fascinated me most was the impact not upon the major targets — public figures in a major or minor way — but upon those private individuals who get caught in the crossfire: the wives and lovers who never wanted to be in the newspapers. I have had the chance to meet people over whose lives a tidal wave of public interest suddenly swept, briefly but with unimaginable force: leaving them astonished, wounded and beached.

I liked those I met, every one. They were better, nicer and more interesting women than stupid press caricatures would suggest. Before introducing the first, Gillian Roberts, let me remind you of a tale which, being inconsequential, died as fast as it flared. It hit Mrs Roberts like this. She was at home in a village in North Yorkshire. Her husband had separated from her and was involved with another woman. She was watching the Boat Race when a journalist from the *News of the World* knocked. Was she having an affair with the vicar?

She sent him away. The truth is she was. What she did not know, but (along with ten million readers of the *News of the World*) was shortly to discover, was that the newspaper had installed a hidden camera in a bookcase by her bed. They were about to publish pictures of her making love with the Rev. Roger Holmes, who was shrieking (said the paper): "I'm the knicker vicar of North Yorkshire!" Her estranged husband, still nominally a householder, had let the newspaper install the camera while she was away.

"I went into a complete panic when

I registered what they had done," she told me. She searched desperately for hidden cameras. She showed me the hole in her bedside bookcase where one must have been installed. It was, of course, the vicar, not she, who was the newspaper's target. But she felt utterly violated — in some ways more so than her male lover. I suppose I expected to meet some sort of giggling floozy. Instead I met an immensely thoughtful and civilised 35-year-old woman with a degree in English literature from the University of London and a master's degree in medieval literature. Of the pair, Gillian was the more sensitive. Of the pair, she was the more grievously hurt.

I never met the vicar's wife, Mrs Lynn Holmes. She has steadfastly refused to talk to the press, though she could have made a great deal of money had she done so. Mrs Holmes will have seen everybody's side of the story published but her own. Of the trio, I suspect, she is the worst hurt of all.

Two women, then, neither the focus of media interest, but part of the collateral damage. Both are too strong for it to be fair to say their lives have been wrecked. But to talk to Gillian Roberts is to talk to the survivor of the equivalent of some horrific road accident, still staring into space and in a state of post-traumatic shock. Will she ever feel completely private, anywhere, again?

This, too, was the impression which Julia Stent gave. She was the former lover of the then Tory minister, Tim Yeo. His wife knew the affair had happened. Julia Stent's baby by him, Claudia, was only months old, and was recovering from hospital treatment, when her Christmas Eve three years ago was shattered by the arrival at her door of the press.

She endured some three months of nightmare. The media stalked her out for weeks, followed her to Lanzarote on an attempted holiday with her baby, telephoned her in the night, and even faked a call from an accident and emergency ward, claiming she had been seriously injured

and seeking from her appalled elderly mother (via her doctor's surgery) the name of the baby's next of kin.

"Hiding did me no good at all," she told me. "I stayed out of the way and the press had to invent a character." In fact, the press invented two, which they freely interchanged. Stent was a lover and a lawyer. Simple then — "slag and party-girl"; or "bossy, modern career-woman". "No average single mother," sneered *The Guardian*. "Few fallen women have fallen so squarely on their feet," simpered *The Sunday Times*, "success in the law, which offers increasing numbers of women self-respect..."

"You girl loved a Tory air-brained," giggled *The Sun*. Only when warned that if she would not talk, the *News of the World* might run the story along the lines of a jolly quiz — "which of these ministers might be the father of Julia's baby?" — did she confirm her lover had been Yeo.

She told me she was offered huge sums for interviews — and astronomical sums to pose scantily clad. She refused, so the press said she was claiming up and "hiding". When she finally buckled and sold an interview to *Hello!* magazine because (she believed — correctly) they would treat her and her baby kindly, and the rest of the press might then go away, *The Guardian* attacked her. *The Daily Star*'s commentary: "Hello — I smell a big rat — the hypocrisy makes me want to vomit. First Tim Yeo's mistress begs the press to leave her alone then — hey presto! — she and her baby are splattered all over the pages of that brown-nosing magazine, *Hello!*"

Yet Julia Stent was not the target. In the end the media got their man: Tim Yeo resigned as minister. You may think they hurt him. No doubt. But I think they hurt her more.

And here, too, is a second woman at whose hurt we can only guess because she does not speak to reporters. Mrs Diane Yeo must have been wounded enough by the fact of her husband's affair, but the public

humiliation which followed — this was the biggest national news around over that whole Christmas period — will have been mortifying. She resisted the pressure to give "her side" in print. I think people who do not give interviews to reporters are absolute heroes.

And now for Joanna Whibley, who did finally speak to the BBC. I would have been tempted to make my fortune in the process. She never tried to. This is the woman who in the late Seventies had a relationship with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Argyll, Roderick Wright. A son, Kevin, was born in 1981. I went to see her at home, a month ago.

She told a story of near-siege by the press, of neighbours bringing emergency food supplies, of her attempts to block the TV floodlights shining through her curtains, of Kevin running a gauntlet on his way to school. She showed us the slips of paper pushed under her door requesting interviews and offering special protection — and money. Persuaded that she sought nothing for herself, journalists then tried to blackmail her with offers for charitable causes — how, they asked her, could she find it in her heart to deprive a charity? Finally she agreed to give the BBC her story. She believed they would play fairest with her.

Of all my interviewees, Joanna Whibley was the most painfully honest, and tortured about her own motives. She had both feared exposure, she said, yet found it a relief when it came. Church sources had never acknowledged her son's existence until she spoke. She was torn between an angry shame that he was being airbrushed out of the picture, and a desire to protect him from harassment. She had been talked into an injunction gagging the media from asking her son questions — and now Kevin, whom I think was longing to give his side of the story, could not be interviewed. He seemed an intelligent and loving son.

Two good people who haven't bared their hearts for money, trying to keep their heads above water on an estate near Eastbourne. Collateral damage in the coward rush of our growing national hysteria. I end the series with no brainwaves for putting things right. But do we have to go on like this?

The series continues for three weeks at noon on Sundays.

Matthew Parris

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Smoking gun

ALAN MILBURN, the Health Minister responsible for NHS budgets, lobbied Rothmans to keep open two huge factories in Co Durham that produce 900 million cigarettes a week. As his fellow Health Minister Tessa Jowell attempts to extricate herself from the row about her links with tobacco advertising in Formula One, Milburn has admitted that he contacted senior management at the Swiss conglomerate to save 1,400 jobs he feared were threatened in Darlington and Spennymoor. The MP for Darlington, whose department spends £1.7 billion a year treating smokers, said on the eve of the election: "Neither [town] can afford to lose an employer like Rothmans. The consequences of closure don't bear thinking about."

Milburn, former president of the MSF white-collar union until he came to MP in 1992, delighted former comrades by his robust defence of an industry employing so many of his members. Milburn, a Gordon Brown crony, was drafted into the department as a safe pair of hands.

When I ran my scoop past Rothmans it said it would keep the MP informed should there be any possibility of job losses. If he is not too busy, that is, dealing with the 120,000 people who die here a year from lighting up.

IT MUST be the only profession where the use of what is produced is judged irrelevant. Philip Morris

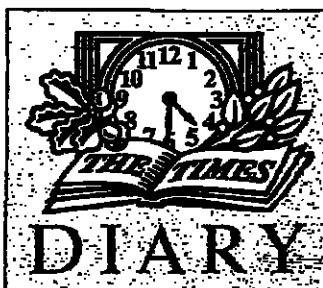


Milburn and 20 friends

son, an associate with Architects Co-Partnership, was awarded a prize for designing a hospital in Gaza. Building Design magazine says the hospital, funded by a £23-million EU grant, remains unused six months after completion.

Stirling work

HAVING scoured Pevsner's, English Heritage has found digs to launch its annual report. No 1 Poultry, in the City, a monstrous



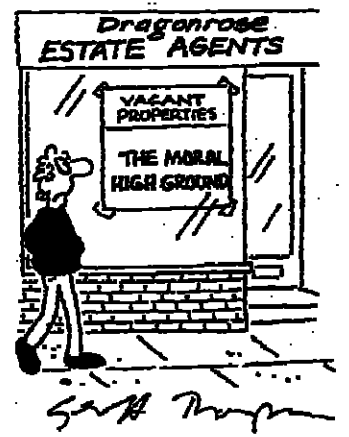
caruncle designed by the late Sir James Stirling. Problem. English Heritage spent five years campaigning against it when the site's owner, Lord Palumbo, first suggested it in 1984. The then chairman, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, objected that eight listed Victorian buildings would be demolished. Senior figures in English Heritage are unamused. Since Sir Jocelyn Stevens became chairman in 1992, priorities have changed. "Sir Jocelyn has decided the debate is closed," says a well-filled skirt there. Nothing to do with his close friend Palumbo, naturally.

POSTSCRIPT to the appointment of Alec Reed, Labour donor, whom Tony Blair asked to investigate the bad state of education and training. His own empire, Reed Executive, must have an impeccable record on employment

rights? Er, not quite. Earlier this year an industrial tribunal found an offshoot guilty of sexual discrimination and wrongful dismissal against a pregnant manager who had worked there for 24 years. Marlene Turner had complained to Reed of harassment but the tribunal ruled that the matter had not been corrected. Reed told the tribunal: "We always fight tribunal cases and we always win." What a right-on guy.

Black arts

I HEAR that Conrad Black, Telegraph proprietor, has invited Tony Blair to speak at the annual dinner



of his Toronto-based Hollinger Group, in a London art gallery. Past speakers have included Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. I hope that Black, whose newspapers are still preoccupied with the Conservatives, is not demonstrating his affection for a leader of the Left a little too late.

TESSA JOWELL, the embattled Health Minister, has cancelled plans today to present a Bella magazine prize to a woman who has given up smoking. Coward.

Jobsworth

DESPITE his much-vaunted humble roots, Michael Meacher is rather grand. So Whitehall is exercised by suggestions that the Environment Minister has appointed a special adviser, a privilege reserved hitherto for Cabinet members. Meacher's office names Stephen Tindale as his special adviser. So what is Tindale's job? "I work closely with Mr Meacher," he says. When, I wonder, is a special adviser not a special adviser?

FOR a man who collected families, Sir James Goldsmith's small and intimate memorial service was bereft of spouses. A discreet order went out: space was limited so even



Kissin tell: Evgeny

some grand acolytes would have to leave wives at home. No mistresses, either.

Matushka

ALARMING news from that much admired stretch of trouser, Evgeny Kissin, Russian pianist: when he weds he might continue to live with his parents. "In Russia children sometimes do so indefinitely," he says (from his folks' flat in New York). "I wouldn't mind nor I am sure would my wife." Sure, old boy.

JASPER GERARD

Philip Howard



Follow the paper chase of a high-tech Prospero

Oh for a Magnetometer of Fire, That could discover hidden manuscripts, Like Mary Shelley's long-lost children's book (It was the book was lost and not the child!)

As modern Prosperos with high-tech probes Have found the prototype for Mandy's Dome, First Balls of Brits' obsession with the Round, Except those Ancient Britons built to last, Their wooden henge has stayed stuck in the ground For 50 centuries. Our plastic Dome Will stand for only five years, while inside Nothing of interest such as sacrifice Or praying for fine weather will take place.

When archaeologists invent a wand To conjure up lost paper from the past, Then comes the treasure hunt worth more than gold. Records of Ecclestone's Bounty may come to light — For 'tis sport to have nice Mr Smug Hoist with his own cowpat of yucky sleaze — And Bernie plays the clown in this tragic farce Of Grand Prix bungs and shunts and knavery. And other masterpieces from the past Lie deep in paper mines waiting to be found.

Eighty lost tragedies of Aeschylus Could memorise another Golgotha, Drenching our stage with gore and choruses Easier to admire than translate accurately.

The Gospel according to St Keith may yet be found. Though if the textual scholars take as long Interpreting it as they are for the Dead Sea Scrolls That lost book might as well stay where it is. To lie in obfuscation and to rot. Kipling's lost homosexual novel may turn up. The sequel to *Jane Eyre*, *A la négligence* Du temps perdu, Dante's *Inferno II*, *Sir Gawain and the Technicolour Knight*.

But of all the paper treasures of the past, Shredded in the backward and abyss of time, The one we most desire is Shakespeare's own, *Love's Labour's Won*, a play which might unclasp For us the last book even of his secret soul. *Love's Labour's Lost*, his comedy of love, With the King of Navarre and his three courtiers, Has never been the most popular of his plays. It is too full of puns and arch conceits. Too witty by half. But it has moments too.

The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You, that way, we, this. That farewell has a dying fall. Tears to the eyes. And when those four pretentious young gallants Each overhears each other confessing love, And breaking vows of austere chastity, Memory clicks: Sir Toby Belch and Co. Peep out from the box tree while Malvolio reads The treacherous letter setting him up as a gull. And Benedick is tricked to overhear How Beatrice is supposedly in love with him. While Beatrice is similarly set up to overhear How Benedick's in love with her. *Love's Labour's Won* Was listed as one of Shakespeare's comedies In 1598. For years It was identified with non-EC *The Taming of the Shrew*. But then both titles Were listed on a bookseller's catalogue.

So *Love's Labour's Won* may actually exist. In some paper mountain of old manuscript, The Bodleian, an Inn of Court, our own offices, To be found when we shift paper to move out. And if it does, it's worth a Grand Prix more Than Bernie's dosh, tobacco bungs or Mandy's slips. True immortality and priceless — only in the word. But the right words, of course.

ATTENTION ALL SH



DISILLUSION DAY

For all who thought that Labour government might be different

Tony Blair has learnt little from the mistakes of the Major administration. The last Prime Minister, when he was in trouble, would usually react too little, too late and under pressure. The result was that he looked weak and shifty, and rarely seemed in control of events. Anyone who had been out of the country since April might now return and wonder what has changed.

The saga of tobacco sponsorship, Formula One, and the donations of its boss, Bernie Ecclestone, is a new lesson in how not to conduct government. The masters of media manipulation have allowed themselves to be driven by the media. Each time that *The Times* has revealed a fact — from the size of Mr Ecclestone's first donation to the possibility of a second — Labour has produced only the minimum most defensive response.

This pattern has been evident from the very beginning. Mr Blair did not, as he suggested, ask Sir Patrick Neill for advice on whether to accept Mr Ecclestone's money as soon as he had reached the decision to exempt Formula One from the sponsorship ban. He did so when it became clear that newspapers were going to publish the existence of a donation.

Then, when Labour agreed to follow Sir Patrick's advice and repay the money, it refused to reveal the size of the donation, or the fact that another had been offered. Only when *The Times* found out that it was nearer £1 million than £5,000 did the party admit that fact. But even then, it took more journalistic investigation to discover what Labour had tried to hide: that another gift had been offered since.

It is not only the public that has been deceived. So has Sir Patrick. When Labour's General Secretary, Tom Sawyer, wrote to the chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, he made no mention of the huge size of Mr Ecclestone's donation. Doubtless he hoped that, by sticking to the

"more than £5,000" formula, Sir Patrick would dismiss it as trivial and advise that it could be kept.

Luckily for Sir Patrick, his instinct took him in the other direction. As it turns out, the decision he made was exactly right. But it might not have been. This was a disgraceful attempt to exploit Sir Patrick's inexperience in the job and to mislead him through omission.

Labour has also dragged its feet in releasing the text of Mr Sawyer's letter — and *The Times* has had to resort to other sources to see a copy of Sir Patrick's reply. Now that the former has been published, Labour's evasiveness is easier to understand. Mr Sawyer's letter reads as if he was not even asking Sir Patrick to rule on Mr Ecclestone's first gift, only on the propriety of accepting the second. The party was shocked to be advised to return the £1 million as well. But it has still tried to take credit for acting with honour.

The Conservatives will inevitably struggle to criticise Labour for its actions; in power they were even more secretive. But Labour, by being only half-open, has made matters far worse than they needed to be. The party should have admitted both donations — actual and potential — from the start, along with their amounts. Then, when Mr Blair was minded to change policy, he should have said so openly, giving time and opportunity for opponents to put their case. It may well be true, as he claims, that he took "the right decision for the right reasons". But he has given the public no chance to put this claim to the test.

In order to avoid being accused of succumbing to undue influence, the Prime Minister should have taken the greatest pains to consult, explain and open up decision-making. Instead, we have seen shiftness and cover-up. For many supporters of Mr Blair, this week will mark the beginning of disillusionment.

CHALLENGE TO CLINTON

Iraq cannot be allowed to choose its own inspectors

Subtlety is not Saddam Hussein's best known trait of character. His decision to expel American arms monitors operating for the United Nations in Iraq is simple to decipher. He has sensed division in the ranks of those who once sought to eliminate his biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons capacity. The UN Security Council resolution which was adopted on Wednesday neatly failed to find Iraq in "material breach" of its international obligations and fell short of repeating its warning of "serious consequences" if Baghdad did not conform swiftly. The travel ban imposed on Iraqi officials will be, at most, an inconvenience. His offer to tolerate resumed external inspection without the excluded Americans is not a concession of any standing. The unfortunate price of unity among the five permanent members at the UN has been ambiguity in this message.

None of this is the fault of the Clinton Administration. The United States and Britain would have preferred a very much stronger resolution. This would have been entirely justified by the facts. Saddam's obstructionism can only be the outcome of his continued determination to construct and consolidate his considerable arsenal.

The credibility of the UN will be destroyed if Saddam is again allowed to continue in this fashion. The Security Council must make it clear — in language that is open to but one interpretation — that the UN, not Iraq, will determine its inspectors. Saddam must be told that if his activities cannot be assessed on the ground then they will be bombed from the air. The Iraqi dictator has made his latest move because he has perceived weakness. He will now only

be checked by a show of strength. Sufficient rigour may yet, as it has done in the past, ensure his compliance.

It cannot be assumed that this will automatically happen. Saddam might calculate that his opponents have little stomach for the use of force or will only engage in an exercise of a symbolic and superficial character. President Clinton may be required to disabuse him of that notion. There will be many in Washington urging restraint on the White House. It will be argued that firm action risks the fragmentation of the Gulf War coalition. It will be noted that American relations with the Arab world are already at a dangerously low ebb. It will be suggested that a protracted struggle with Iraq is against the President's personal and political interests. Mr Clinton might conclude from all this advice that a limited strike, avoiding any possible casualties — one that gave Saddam "a bloody nose" — would be the safest option.

It would not be safe in the only sense that matters. That is the eradication of Iraq's illegal weapons. There is every suspicion that the most significant material has been stored in dense population centres. These are precisely the sites from which the UN inspectors have been precluded. Their location is the result of Saddam's strategy. He is determined to shape not only the diplomatic, but also the military, moves made against him. Mr Clinton cannot allow Iraq to select American targets or UN inspectors. A coherent allied stance should make an armed assault redundant. If not, Iraq's most fundamental breach of the ceasefire accords should be met by the most comprehensive military response.

ATTENTION ALL SHIPPING

Why should ferry operators pay for ministerial blunders?

The European Union's Dublin Convention on asylum-seekers, ratified by Britain in 1992, has landed this Government in difficulty. Britain rejected the applications for asylum lodged in Dover by hundreds of gypsies from the Czech Republic and Slovakia. But it is no longer legally empowered simply to put them on a return ferry to France or Belgium, whence they arrived in this country. Instead, it must transport them all the way home. The irritation of Mike O'Brien, the Home Office Immigration Minister, is understandable. But to shift the entire cost of the airfares onto the cross-Channel ferry companies, P&O and Stena, is manifestly inequitable; and his threat to open criminal proceedings against them if they refuse is outrageous.

Mr O'Brien says angrily that the ferry operators "cannot just dump people at a UK port and abandon their responsibilities". What responsibilities? Ferry companies do not make the law. They are also not immigration officers and should not be expected to act as though they were. His point would be fair had they knowingly taken on board passengers without visas or valid travel documents to this country. But these coachloads of travellers came to Britain entirely legally.

Mr O'Brien's legal case for forcing the companies to pay rests on Article 8 of the 1971 Immigration Act. This says that if, for any reason, an immigration officer refuses entry to a passenger, he may direct the

owners of the ship or aircraft which brought them here either to put them back on board, or "to make arrangements for their removal" in any ship or aircraft and to any destination that the immigration officer specifies. The companies are already paying the detention costs of the Gypsies in Dover — as the Act unequivocally, and unfairly, obliges them to do. Leaving aside whether "make arrangements" is the same as "to pay for", the purpose of the Act can never have been to force companies which have accepted a cheap cross-Channel fare to bear the vastly higher costs of a long journey by air.

The companies have, rightly, objected to this impost. Rather than face the costs of a legal challenge, they have reluctantly shipped the occasional case home before; but this latest demand is a serious strain on the profitability of ferries already operating on a very tight margin. They argue, further, that the French Government has been willing to accept any passenger returned within 24 hours; it is hardly the ferry operators' fault that the Home Office takes far longer than that to process cases.

This alone would seem to amount to "reasonable excuse" under Article 27 (b) (iii) of the Act, the clause under which the Government proposes to prosecute — and which also refers to an obligation to make arrangements, rather than to pay. Stena and P&O should take the Government to court; and if they lose, Parliament should change the law.

'Why I made my gift to Labour'

From Mr Bernie Ecclestone

Sir, Sir Patrick Neill's recommendation to the Labour Party that it repay my only donation to the party is well-intentioned but wrong unless Conservative and Labour both now repay all donations from anyone who might appear to have benefited from government decisions (reports, November 11, 12 and 13).

When I made my donation, Labour was not in power. It was their stated intention to ban tobacco advertising, to abolish the pound and to ensure that only criminals possess handguns. I disagree with all these policies, but it would never have occurred to me to insult Mr Blair by suggesting that he change them in return for my money.

I made a donation to the Labour Party because I believe Mr Blair to be a person of exceptional ability who, if free to act, would do an outstanding job for our country. This, I thought, depended on independence from old-fashioned vested interests in the Labour movement. My gift was intended to contribute to this. There were no strings attached. I have just paid an annual personal tax bill of £27 million for the simple privilege of living in England rather than a tax haven. With so large an investment, it is reasonable to pay a million or two extra as a contribution to a free and independent government for my country.

When Mr Max Mosley and I visited Mr Blair on October 16 to discuss tobacco advertising we had already secured the support of several EU governments. Our case was overwhelming — a ban in the EU would have undesirable side effects but achieve no reduction in Formula One publicity for tobacco, while on the other hand the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile could offer a significant compulsory worldwide reduction in return for an EU exemption. My donation did not come into it — the case made itself, just as it had elsewhere in the EU.

I am all in favour of reform in political funding. Governments should be free from the influence of special interests be they trade unions, business or single-issue pressure groups. But until these reforms are in place, I should enjoy the same rights as everyone else. These include the right to make donations to any political party I choose. Anything less implies that I have done something wrong and is a gross, insulting and irrational restriction of my freedom.

I have written to Sir Patrick asking him to reconsider his decision.

Yours faithfully,
B. ECCLESTONE
Formula One Administration Ltd,
6 Princes Gate, SW7
November 13.

Tobacco sponsorship

From the Director General of the Cancer Research Campaign

Sir, Five years ago we published a compelling summary of all current evidence showing the influence of tobacco adverts on children. One study showed that children as young as six associated cigarettes with fast cars and motor racing.

The publication had no impact on the Government, but was exploited by the tobacco industry which targeted more of its advertising at the young.

Now we have a new study, published in *The Lancet* this week, which shows that boys are nearly twice as likely to become regular smokers if they are further racing fans. If any further proof was needed to show that tobacco needs Formula One as much as Formula One needs tobacco, your report today (later editions) that BAT Industries is expected to buy a Formula One team should suffice.

The tobacco industry must recruit half a million new smokers each year in Europe to replace the same number who die from their product. By allowing the industry to sponsor Formula One, the Government is helping them achieve that objective.

Yours sincerely,
GORDON MUIR, Director General,
Cancer Research Campaign,
10 Cambridge Terrace, NW1
November 13.

From Professor Tony Eccles

Sir, A central plank in Formula One's claim for continued tobacco industry sponsorship is that 50,000 jobs could be put at risk without it (letters, November 7, 11). That is utterly tendentious. The likely figure is close to zero.

When an industry clusters, as with Formula One in Britain, the concentration of critical skills makes its continuing attractions all but irresistible. That is why foreign banks flock to the City; why Hollywood remains vital to feature-film making; why Silicon Valley flourishes — despite many attempts to undermine them.

In motor racing, Britain has been dominant in IndyCar design — without being based in the US. Ferrari's British chief designer successfully insisted on being based in Surrey and wouldn't even move to Italy. If location really did not matter, motor-racing design and construction would long ago have departed to Japan. The F1 races may shift towards the Far East, but there are plenty of other formulae to fill European tracks — most of them less boring than a grand prix procession — sponsored by more appealing industries than tobacco.

Yours,
TONY ECCLES,
12 Greville Place, NW6.

Call for new thinking on Iraq crisis

From Dr Ahmad Chalabi, President of the Iraqi National Congress

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("Exploding the myth", November 12) is quite correct to point out that seven years of sanctions and bombing have probably served to bolster rather than weaken Saddam Hussein.

It is time for a new Iraq policy, one that will end Saddam's regime, not one that would allow him to rebuild his nuclear, biological and chemical arsenal. Britain should take the lead in taking effective action to remove Saddam. A good first step would be to indict him and his associates for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

This should be followed by concerted support for the democratic Iraqi Opposition to work from its base in northern Iraq to oust the regime and establish a government that respects democracy, human rights and international law.

Yours sincerely,
AHMAD CHALABI,
President, Iraqi National Congress,
124-128 Barby Road, W10
November 12.

From Mr Valentin Kunin

Sir, Ever since the beginning of the current crisis, high-ranking Russian diplomats have been engaged in intensive talks with the Iraqi leadership, trying to persuade Baghdad to back down from its tough stand and not to interfere with the UN ad hoc commission's work.

On November 5 Foreign Minister Evgeny Primakov stated that "Moscow intends to protest vigorously against anti-Iraqi military operations, considering them harmful to the normalisation of the situation both in Iraq and outside". It was also thanks to Moscow's efforts that Saddam Hussein agreed to allow a UN Security Council delegation to visit Baghdad in the first place.

The Iraqi leader has failed to drive a wedge between permanent members of the Security Council as regards their attitude to his latest demands. Moscow has made it quite plain that Iraq's decision to restrict the work of the commission was unacceptable, because it breaches the Security Council resolution, binding on all states and subject to complete fulfillment. Moscow, which has concluded ma-

for oil deals with Iraq and is keen to get back billions of dollars worth of debts from Iraq, is extremely interested in the normalisation of the situation in that country and an early lifting of international sanctions on Baghdad.

However, Saddam's calculations that Russia would support his open challenges to the world community are unrealistic. The Kremlin is hardly likely to sacrifice its global geopolitical interests and back an unpredictable regime for the sake of minor economic benefits.

Yours etc,
VALENTIN KUNIN,
RIA-Novosti,
4 Zubovskiy Boulevard,
119021 Moscow
November 12.

From the Director of the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Sir, It is tragic that, once again, the Iraqi Government has failed to respond positively to the great efforts of the UN Secretary-General to secure a non-military resolution of the current crisis. While we believe that these efforts should continue, we would support additional measures against individual Iraqi leaders, such as the withdrawing of travel visas, the freezing of personal foreign bank accounts and the like.

Should military action finally be deemed necessary it is essential that this should be authorised by a specific UN Security Council Resolution and that the Council remain in control of the operation throughout. Unilateral action by the US would only play into Saddam Hussein's hands.

Any military action should be targeted only at military sites, and due warning must be given to any civilians used as human shields for military installations to leave the areas concerned. It is also vital that the Secretary-General and the members of the Security Council should continue and intensify their consultations with governments in the region, including Iran.

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM HARPER, Director,
United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
3 Whitehall Court, SW1
November 10.

by those who toil to meet our daily needs, trade — fair trade, not aid — is surely the most effective way to help much of the Third World; last February's BBC television documentary on the production of mangostin in Zimbabwe (television review, February 27) showed how little of what we pay for such produce finds its way to the peapickers at the other end of the food chain.

But the encouraging thing is that by paying very little more we could make a real difference to Third World farmers' standard of living. May we please be given more chances to do so.

Yours faithfully,
TONY BRYER,
5a Waldegrave Gardens,
Twickenham, Middlesex
November 13.

Commons cuppas

From Mr A. G. Byer

Sir, Mr Gary Streeter, MP, boasts (*Diary*, November 12) that he is "happy to drink [his] coffee wherever it comes from" and dismisses the Commons' decision to use only Fairtrade coffee (which ensures a fair deal for Third World farmers) as "a gimmick".

Fortunately many people, myself included, feel that those who produce our coffee (and tea) should receive a reasonable return and to this end we try to buy Fairtrade branded products, now increasingly available in the large supermarkets. I am delighted to see that our elected representatives will be doing the same, whether by choice or not.

Beyond a desire to do the right thing

Sex selection

From Professor R. G. Gosden

Sir, Five years after the opening of the London Gender Clinic, you report (*Weekend*, November 8) the British launch of *la méthode française* for choosing either a boy or a girl. Like other businesses offering "family balancing", the French organisation Rightway is cold-shouldered by academic scientists and condemned by defenders of natural processes — but very profitable at £199 a try. What medical treatment can bypass costly tests and professional scrutiny and still be confident in a success rate of at least 50 per cent?

These services are unlikely to upset society's natural sex-ratio yet, but there is a new method which might. By sorting sperm into male and female types the sex of calves and other farm animals can be predetermined within about 90 per cent certainty. No pseudoscience, this method uses a laser device to distinguish female from male sperm by their larger DNA content. When the machine is operated fast enough, sufficient sperm can be

collected for artificial insemination, which is more convenient and much less expensive than test-tube conception (IVF). The results of a clinical trial in the US are awaited.

If this proves to be a breakthrough for avoiding the conception of boys suffering from serious genetic diseases, such as haemophilia or Duchenne muscular dystrophy, it should be welcomed. But its medical justification could quickly fade into the background as a result of demand for sex selection for more trivial reasons.

Perhaps in the hope of ripping the new technology in the bud, the Dutch Health Ministry is about to close the only gender clinic in their country. Such is the strength of human desire for reproductive freedom, however, that attempts to control sex-selection technology are likely to be futile.

Yours sincerely,
ROGER GOSDEN,
University of Leeds,
Division of Obstetrics & Gynaecology,
Clarendon Wing,
Leeds General Infirmary,
Leeds LS2 9NS
November 9.

Teaching methods

From the Secretary of The Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference

Sir, Libby Purves ("When will we ever learn?", November 4) was right to pay tribute to Gillian duCharme's efforts in going from the headmistress's chair at Benenden to teach for a week in an inner-city comprehensive. Why this should be used as an opportunity to accuse the Headmasters' Conference (sic) of unwillingness to build bridges with the maintained sector and to attack teaching methods in the independent sector is beyond me.

If more is not being done to help children from inner cities and deprived backgrounds in independent schools, the reasons lie elsewhere.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Woodward verdict through the media

From Ms Gail Wilde

Sir, Here in the US, our justice system has what we call the "Oprah Winfrey syndrome": in other words, if a defendant or plaintiff cries, the jury will find in their favour, no matter what the facts. But if the defendant/plaintiff is stone-faced, that person is reviled, and will be shown no mercy. I do not watch trials on TV because they are nothing more than soap operas pandering to the emotions of the public. It's a sickness that has destroyed true justice.

Many of my friends who have been using au pairs are finding another way to have their children taken care of while they are at work: I keep hearing they are terrified that the au pairs will murder their babies. Our media loves to foster such panic and, from what I hear, so does yours. Thank God my children are grown (and still childless) and I no longer have to worry about such stuff.

Yours etc,
GAIL WILDE,
77 Parkgate Drive,
Atlanta, 30328-1074 Georgia.
idawh@earthlink.net
November 11.

From Dr Isha Khan

Sir, A jury in a civilised Western country convicts a lady of murdering an infant, the judge changes the verdict to manslaughter and the child's parents are distraught. Yet on her release from prison a small village in England and most of the British media have engaged in an orgy of celebration and virtually raised her to the status of a British heroine.

Have we completely taken leave of our moral sense or am I missing something?

Yours sincerely,
ISHA KHAN,
101 South Anderson Drive, Aberdeen.
i.khan@abdn.ac.uk
November 11.

From Mr Ken Loveland

Sir, The spectacle of Brits celebrating the release of convicted child killer Louise Woodward by drinking and cheering, speaks volumes on the precipitous decline of your once great country.

Yours etc,
KEN LOVELAND,
PO Box 93,
Burlington, 82411 Wyoming.
klovelan@spynet.com
November 10.

Brown and Orwell

From Mr John Wolstenholme

Sir, Further to Melvyn Bragg's article, "The Chancellor keeps the aspistrada flying" (November 10), I would add the following postscript.

Gordon Brown last week attended a London Film Festival reception for the new film of George Orwell's book *Keep the Aspidochelone Flying*. His informal attendance at such an event may not have been solely because of an interest in "his hero" Orwell (real name: Blair).

More importantly, perhaps it was also due to a recognition of something which the US has held dear to its heart for some seventy years. Namely that, in financial and cultural terms, films can do wonders for a nation's exports.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WOLSTENHOLME
(Executive Producer,
Keep the Aspidochelone Flying),
Bashford Lodge,
Hillbrow Road, Liss, Hampshire.
November 11.

Seeing stars

From Mr Malcolm Farrow

Sir, I hate to be a spoilsport and criticise the excellent cartoon by Peter Brookes today, but it is perfectly possible to fly the EU flag upside down and this frequently occurs. I admit the error does not have the dramatic impact of flying the Union Flag upside down, however.

The 12 stars on the EU flag have five points each — actually they are correctly called "mulletts", because an heraldic "star" has six points or more. When flown correctly a single point of each mullett should be uppermost and two points should face downwards like legs; the other two points being horizontal.

All 12 mullets on the flag should point up and down in this manner, just as they do on the Stars and Stripes (or more correctly the "Mulletts and Stripes").

Yours sincerely,
M. J. D. FARROW,
Carlings,
42a Durdur Road,
Petersfield, Hampshire.
November 11.

Three-point turn

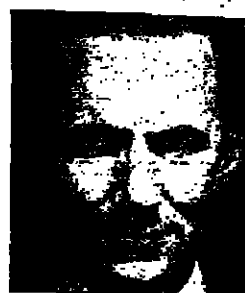
From Mr George Edwards

Sir, Was it not remarkably prescient of the founders of Mercedes-Benz to select a radiator badge that looks the same at any angle (report and photograph, November 13)?

Yours sincerely,
GEORGE EDWARDS,
20 Fairways Drive,
Harrogate, North Yorkshire.
November 13.

THE TIMES

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marriage go
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at retirement
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 1997

Rolls to receive £200m in funds from State

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is to pump £200 million into Rolls-Royce to help to fund a key aircraft engine development project. An application from British Aerospace, believed to be for the same sum, is also on the table to assist work on the new Airbus.

Neither the Government nor Rolls-Royce will reveal details of the deal, which will deliver cash over the next four years, but John Battle, Industry Minister, said it was a commercial deal. The Government will receive returns on its cash as and when the engines are sold.

Mr Battle said: "This is not state aid. It is a commercially assessed deal. We could get returns over 40 years." He said the Government wanted to assure Rolls-Royce's position as a world leader in the next century and feared that development on the Trent family of engines — a critical peg in its strategy — could have been abandoned. He said the cash would help to secure 16,000 jobs in the long term.

Rolls-Royce believes that the market for improved Trent engines to power large aircraft could deliver £50 billion in sales. It competes with General Electric and Pratt & Whitney of the US, both of which receive assistance through the Government and NASA.

Tony Blair recently signalled his support for consolidation in the aerospace industry. The Government is keen that Rolls-Royce has a prominent role in the global market. The increasing market influence of large US companies is worrying the European players which face greater political considerations in joint operations. Mr Battle said: "The agreement with Rolls-Royce embodies the Government's commitment to public/private partnerships."

Bae said it awaited the Government's response to its own request "with urgency". Bae, which is a partner in Airbus Industrie, wants help with the development of the new A340-500 and 600 Airbus.

Rolls-Royce has seven international partners in the existing Trent project. It intends to recruit partners for the new project. In large-scale developments the aerospace industry tends to involve partners to share risk rather than seek traditional bank finance. Rolls-Royce, which has an A2 credit rating from Moody's, said: "We don't have a record of going to banks."

One analyst said the state funds would help to ensure the survival of the programme in a way that would have been impossible for Rolls-Royce to

manage independently while satisfying the demands of shareholders.

John Rose, chief executive of Rolls-Royce, said the company now had "the opportunity of addressing, with a single engine family, the market for all of the new large aircraft currently being planned". He said there was already customer interest.

Airbus Industrie has chosen the Trent 500 to power the A340-500 and 600 and has a memorandum of understanding with Rolls-Royce that will enable the Trent 900 to fit its planned A3XX super jumbo.

The Government will not say what proportion of the development costs it is footing, but under world trade rules and the Civil Aviation Act it is allowed to provide up to a third of the costs of a launch.

Rolls-Royce already pays the Government about £30 million a year in effective royalties for previous launch aid. It last received assistance — of £30 million — in 1984.

Rolls-Royce yesterday ruled out a rights issue in connection with future Trent development. The shares, which had less than an hour's trading after the announcement, closed up 1/2 p at 217 1/2 p. They have recently lost ground after hitting a five-year high of 268 1/2 p in June.

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Sir Ralph Robins, chairman, is already aware of customer interest in the new engines

Burton £65m spent on demerger and relaunch

By FRASER NELSON

THE BURTON GROUP yesterday said that it has spent £65.6 million so far on the demerger of its Debenhams department stores and bringing its remaining high street fashion chains under a single tier of management.

The company, which will spin-off Debenhams next January and rename itself Arcadia, spent £14.6 million on City advisers to work out the structure of the new company. It has spent £4.4 million shedding about 300 workers, and will lose £15.4 million on the disposal of surplus offices.

John Hoerner, chief executive, said that after the changes, the company will be able to reshuffle its high street mix of stores and save between £10 million and £15 million a year. He said: "We have destroyed the tribal attitude that used to exist in the group. If we want to change shops to different brands, there is no body saying 'oh my God, they're taking over my turf'."

Mr Hoerner added that Internet shopping, where Burton is one of the most advanced companies, had yet to prove itself commercially. He said: "If our people get three orders through the Internet, they get excited. If I was to financially analyse it, I would say we are wasting the company's money, but it is my job to work on things which may take off when I'm long gone."

Internet sites for Hawkhead and Racing Green opened earlier this week. The company has also sold its five main distribution centres to Tibbetts & Britten, the logistics company. The deal, involving the transfer of 2,500 staff, will take place in January.

His comments came as the group returned a £187 million (£121 million) underlying pre-tax profit for the year to

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BUSINESS
TODAY

STOCK MARKET		
FTSE 100	4711.0	(-9.4)
FTSE All share	2228.3	(-5.15)
Nikkei	16427.27	(-6.90)
New York	7428.58	(+27.28)
Dow Jones	907.53	(+1.67)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	100 1/8%	(100 1/8%)
Yield	6.10%	(6.11%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt	117 1/2%	(116 1/2%)

STERLING		
New York	1.7013	(1.7047)
London	1.6983	(1.7028)
DM	2.2885	(2.2911)
FF	6.7987	(6.8500)
Sfr	2.3787	(2.3815)
Yen	215.87	(214.77)
E Index	103.9	(104.4)

US DOLLAR		
London	1.7202	(1.7170)
FF	5.7395	(5.7505)
Sfr	1.3978	(1.3915)
Yen	126.07	(125.89)
E Index	105.6	(105.5)

TOKYO CLOSING		
Tokyo close	Yen 125.43	

WORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jan)	\$19.80	(\$19.85)

SOIL		
London close	\$307.65	(\$308.45)

* denotes midday trading price

Resistance

Partners in Coopers & Lybrand met in London for the second day running yesterday, amid signs of growing resistance to the intended merger with Price Waterhouse. Up to a quarter of UK C&L partners are opposed. Page 28

Pay problem

South West Water says low pay is deterring would-be chief executives of the company as it struggles to find a new head after almost a year of searching. The company says that "for certain people, salary is a problem." Page 33

US broker plans British presence

FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK

EDWARD D JONES, the US retail stockbroker, is planning to open 400 offices across Britain, luring thousands of new investors with its "Wall Street comes to Main Street" strategy.

John Bachmann, Jones's head, is in London this week to prepare the opening of the first eight offices in January. The plan will take five years and will focus on the Home Counties and middle-class suburbs.

Offices will be one-man bands positioning themselves between the village pub and the village church. In the US, the 3,900 Jones offices operate like small insurance brokerages that generate most of their sales by being in regular social contact with clients.

A spokeswoman said: "We are like a corner shop. Our

people live in the communities they work in, creating a lot of trust. We are in the relationship business. We stress the long-term."

Jones will send a few experienced US brokers to Britain to help recruitment. The most important qualities Jones is looking for in its brokers is not a finance degree but the ability to remember the names of all family members of a client.

In the US, Jones promotes a conservative investment philosophy. It does not invest in derivatives, commodities or high-risk stocks.

However, it faces a tough challenge as many investors can access their portfolio directly on the Internet. US new business growth has slowed as the number of Internet connections have rocketed.

Greenspan warns of Asia effect

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS EDITOR

ALAN GREENSPAN, the Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, yesterday gave warning that the impact on the American economy from the crisis in Asian markets will not be negligible and that, more broadly, world growth could be dampened.

In testimony to the House of Representatives Banking Committee, Mr Greenspan said: "The direct and indirect trade impact on our economy of a prolonged period of slower growth in South-East Asia and the large decline in its currencies is potentially significant."

He said that the so-called contagion effect, in which weakness in one economy spreads to others, was "particularly troublesome".

Economic View, page 31

Societies given mutual help

By ANNE ASHWORTH

BUILDING societies are to be given extra ammunition in their campaign against speculators, after a surprise Government announcement yesterday. The new rules should make it more difficult for dissident members to force a society to demutualise.

Helen Liddell, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, told building societies that, in future, 50 per cent of all savers and borrowers must take part in a conversion vote.

The previous turnout requirement was 20 per cent of members. This brings societies into line with quoted companies, where 50 per cent of shareholders must cast their votes for or against a takeover bid.

The new higher threshold is intended to make it harder for

a small number of members to compel a society to become a bank. In July, Nationwide defeated an attempt by a group of members, led by Michael Hardern, a butler, to gain seats on the board and to force the society to abandon its mutual status. Just a third of Nationwide members cast their votes. It is felt that, if even more members are required to vote in a final conversion poll, that this will ensure the rejection of demutualisation, if it is not supported by the board.

Brian Davis, Nationwide chief executive and chairman of the Building Societies Association, welcomed Mrs Liddell's concession saying that it was "unacceptable for a small group of members to determine the future of a society".

Capital confident Virgin deal safe from Evans

By RAYMOND SNOODY,
MEDIA EDITOR

SENIOR executives at Capital Radio believe the planned merger with Richard Branson's Virgin Radio will go ahead despite the unexpected intervention of Chris Evans, the presenter, with a rival offer.

David Campbell, chief executive of Virgin Media, said yesterday that the Evans bid, supported by Apax, the venture capital group, and Paribas, the French merchant bank, was a serious bid and would receive serious consideration. Both Apax and Paribas are former shareholders of Virgin Radio.

Mr Branson now has three

options for the future of Virgin Radio. He can go ahead with the merger with Capital, worth about £87 million including the assumption of debt, a deal that is subject to Monopolies and Mergers Commission approval. He can

merge Virgin Radio with Ginger Productions, the Chris Evans holding company in a deal worth about £80 million, or decide that Virgin Radio is strong enough to stand alone.

David Mansfield, Capital chief executive, said: "We have been working very hard with Virgin since the referral [to the MMC] and we are both committed to seeing the deal go through. We are very much looking forward to welcoming Richard Branson to our board." It is believed that Capital was reassured by senior Virgin executives privately yesterday that it was still the intention to complete the original deal.

Yesterday Capital said pre-tax profit rose 9.2 per cent to £35 million in the year to September 30. Revenue for the radio business grew 14.6 per cent to £86.1 million.

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Branson: three options

Zinfandel?

Didn't I back him in the National?

0800 731 1674
ERNEST & JULIO GALLO
CALIFORNIA

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Liberty rebels agree not to accept offer

[illegible]

Fuelling an engine for growth



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Poor Mrs Beckett. After months of being criticised for a certain lack of dynamism, the President of the Board of Trade was precluded from presiding over the announcement of the most positive news to come out of the Department of Trade and Industry under this Government.

A package of £200 million to bolster Rolls-Royce in its efforts to cast Industry Minister John Birt in the role of action man, since Mrs Beckett could hardly be seen to be spearheading a move that will undoubtedly bring benefits to her constituency. Politics is a tough business.

But, for all the talk of transparency that has been issuing forth from Westminster of late, the terms of the deal with Rolls-Royce remain opaque. We are told that the investment by the Government could reap a fine return over time. Simultaneously, we are to believe that the money would never have been provided by a commercial lender on such a basis. We can believe the latter and take the former with a hefty dose of optimism.

It might turn out to be justified, since Rolls has a fine product and the chance to lead an admittedly small field. Customers are already lining up for Trent engines and, if the airline industry remains in its current expansive mood, perhaps Rolls-Royce can net the £50 billion of Trent sales that it is intimating could be possible — over time.

Mrs Beckett has in the past been at pains to insist that the Government would not indulge in the business of "backing winners", a policy that led to some disastrous investments by previous administrations. But it was the implementation rather than the principle that was at fault.

Both of Rolls-Royce's competitors receive state funding and it is legitimate for the Government to allow Rolls-Royce to fight on equal terms.

This would not be the case if Rolls-Royce was an ailing company with no hope of success, but it is the opposite. Its problem is the time scale that it must operate on, which could see its Trent engines still in demand 40 years hence. Try selling that sort of lead time to an investment bank.

Britain has now opted out of trying to create a world-class investment bank and has precious few world-beating businesses of its own.

As a nation we have seen companies from carmakers to utilities taken over by overseas organisations prepared to put in the investment that the locals cannot or will not. There is no longer even a cry of national

outrage when the possibility of Rolls-Royce motor cars being taken over by BMW is mooted as a likely outcome of Vickers' decision to sell. We have come round to the view that it is jobs that matter rather than ownership.

But the Trent project offers the chance to bolster jobs, serendipitously in Mrs Beckett's parliamentary constituency, whilst cementing Rolls-Royce's position as a world-class company.

Branson and a clause for concern

Chris Evans only has a ten week contract to produce his inimitable breakfast show on Virgin Radio. Clearly he is enjoying himself far too much to contemplate a life of morning lie ins, so he had little option but to try to buy the company and ensure continuation of his show. How kind of the Evans fans at

venture capitalist Apex to offer to back him in his ambitions.

Capital Radio thought that Richard Branson was already committed to its £87 million offer, but the Monopolies Commission has boringly intervened there and, anyhow, Evans and his Ginger Productions will probably be able to structure a deal which is more sympathetic to the ideals of the bearded, extrovert, entrepreneur.

But Branson should take his time studying the small print. It seems he may have reason to regret the haste with which he rushed into selling the majority of his stake in Virgin record stores to WH Smith. Branson is keen to take control over what is now the Virgin Our Price chain but has already had his first offer roundly rebuffed. He may have found himself somewhat disadvantaged in the negotiations thanks to a clause in the original sale contract which gives WH Smith a valuable bargaining counter. For the stores

group whose recent dismal performance led to it being subjected to the indignity of a bungled bid from one of its former employees, there is reason for a small smirk over the deal it clinched with Virgin.

Come the middle of 1999, Smith, should it so wish, has the option to buy out Virgin's 25 per cent stake in their joint business for nine times post-tax profits — not a hefty multiple in the music business. The Virgin name goes with the deal, and, apparently remains there for the next couple of decades. For the brand name which he has spent so much time and PR effort in building up to be at the mercy of another business must be anathema to Branson, but that could be the case. Perish the thought, but WH Smith could even choose to sell Virgin Our Price to a generous bidder — surely British Airways would not contemplate a diversification in this direction, would it? Newly energised by the threat

of a bid, Smith is demergering its Waterstones chain and could be persuaded to sell the music shops, but not for a song. Virgin, which manages the shops, can hardly retaliate by letting the shops run down: that would merely have the effect of lessening the price that would apply should Smith take up the option in a couple of years' time.

Top man with a mission

John Hoerner is not an impetuous man. The Burton boss has formulated his plans for splitting the company in two with extreme caution and if he believes the £66 million bill will prove worthwhile, investors have reason to believe him. The fact that turning Burton into Arcade and the more prosaic Debenhams will generate City fees of £14.6 million is an indication of why some people still want to be investment bankers. BZW is one of the beneficiaries of this deal.

While Hoerner can fill pages with charts and diagrams to show why the new structure will be beneficial, the essence of the change is simple. When the

Nebraskan first turned up in London, he was dedicated to turning dowdy Debenhams into a modern market leader. With that well underway, his frustrations with a head office peopled by the energetic Sir Ralph Halpern and his high-spending colleagues reached the pitch where he either took over the group or quit. It was a close thing, but he took over and has changed the culture at Burton and restored its profits. But now he wants to concentrate on doing for the multiples what he did for Debenhams and the demerger will enable him to do just that.

Yesterday's figures demonstrated that he starts from a relatively strong position: profits from the multiples were up by almost a quarter over the year. But with Hoerner in hands-on mode, those figures have much further to go. He will earn his investment banker size salary.

Too Liddell

Helen Liddell gave but a minor concession to preserving the principle of mutuality yesterday when she moved the threshold for conversion to a 50 per cent vote. As she pointed out, it was not carpebaggers which yanked building societies, kicking and screaming, out of their mutual status: it was their boards. Directors saw benefits for themselves as well as windfalls for their members. Her ruling would not have stopped them.

Sunleigh businesses for sale

By FRASER NELSON

SUNLEIGH, owner of the McLaren pushchairs, Powakaddy golf trolleys and Laser dinghies businesses, has put all three up for sale after saying that cheap imports are harming its core UK market.

The company, which six months ago promised investors that it would not go into the red, now expects to lose £1 million on 1997 operations, before charges for restructuring McLaren.

Alastair Findlayson, the chief executive, said the pushchair market had become dominated by mar-ques from the Far East.

He said: "We just can't manufacture here at anything like the prices the Far East companies are selling for. We think the businesses are fundamentally sound, but, at the moment, the group does not have sufficient resources to support all three and that's why we've prepared to consider offers for any of them."

Sunleigh shares fell to 4p, from 1 1/2p, giving a market value of £3.28 million. The company generates 70 per cent of its sales in the UK. Profits were £133 million on sales of £384 million in 1996.

Railtrack doubts over Channel Tunnel project

By CARL MORTIMER

GERALD CORBETT, the new chief executive of Railtrack, yesterday poured cold water on speculation that the company would throw its financial might behind the faltering Channel Tunnel rail link project.

Mr Corbett said the project would fit well within Railtrack's skill base but insisted that the company would not participate if the investment proved to be "high risk". He said: "They would like us to be their bankers, but that is of no interest to us."

He questioned whether the existing ownership structure of London and Continental Railways was attractive to Railtrack. "We have all had our fingers burnt in consortia. It has never seemed to me to be a recipe for success. You spend all your time talking to the other parties," he said.

Railtrack is expecting a response in the next two weeks to its request for more information about the rail link project, which is backed by Virgin, National Express, London Electricity and SBC Warburg. Shares in Railtrack soared 10



Horton: freight plans

per cent yesterday after the company released half-year figures that showed a sharp increase in the rate of investment to £520 million, up 38 per cent on the corresponding period last year. The share price rose to £10.30 was helped by a cautious welcome from John Swift, the Rail Regulator, to the investment figures.

Sir Robert Horton, Railtrack's chairman, said the

investment programme was building up and would get bigger, and he predicted a shift to more growth-based investment. He pointed to plans for a £300-400 million London orbital railway aimed at shifting road freight on to rail. Sir Robert said that Government would need to lend a hand by reducing subsidies to the road transport industry. He said: "We want freight to be a paying business but you have to have a level playing field, not one where road is getting a leg-up."

Sir Robert said he welcomed the prospect of the Strategic Rail Authority but he gave warning that "intrusive and tougher regulation would hinder Railtrack's ability to raise money. "We need to be free to borrow," he said.

Railtrack's pre-tax profit for the six months to September rose 10 per cent to £190 million, including a £9 million gain from the performance regime and a £21 million profit from property disposals. Earnings per share rose 16 per cent to 33.6p and the interim dividend is 7.9p, up 8 per cent.

Temps, page 30

Fall in Asian stock markets hits Ladbroke

ECONOMIC problems in South-East Asia have been blamed by Ladbroke Group for a fall in the number of high-rollers visiting London's casinos (Dominic Walsh writes).

In a third-quarter trading update, the company admitted that while its UK retail betting business had shown a substantial year-on-year improvement, the London casinos had "remained quiet" after a reduction in attendances by punters from South-East Asia.

Progress made by the group in the first half had continued into the third quarter, and pre-tax profits were "significantly ahead of the corresponding period last year", it said. Simon Johnson, analyst at BZW, is forecasting full-year profits before tax of £218.4 million, up from £163 million.

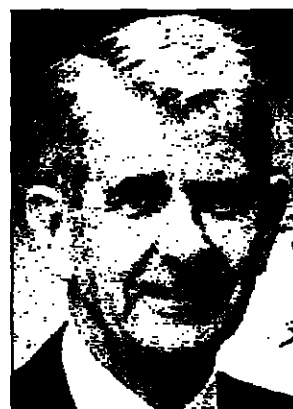
Bristol & West helps lift Bank of Ireland

By RICHARD MILES
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

A MAIDEN contribution from Bristol & West has helped to boost the first-half pre-tax profits of Bank of Ireland by 30 per cent, to £250.7 million (£223 million). Bank of Ireland said that strong growth in lending and in fee-based income helped it to lift earnings per share by a third. Its London-listed shares rose above 800p briefly before falling back to close at 792 1/2p, up 18p on the day.

Maurice Keane, chief executive designate, said that residential lending rose by 16.5 per cent on a buoyant Irish housing market. Property prices have risen by 16 per cent during the year.

Fee-based income rose by £152.5 million, to £198.5 million, as the bank expanded its asset management busi-



Keane: acquisition interest

ness and Davy, its stock-broking subsidiary, capitalised on brisk activity in the Dublin stock market.

Operating expenses rose by 15 per cent, largely because of a higher salaries bill. The costs also included a charge of £15

million to deal with the millennium computer bug. Mr Keane said that the bank was likely to spend a total of £130 million preparing for 2000. Bristol & West, whose £600 million acquisition was completed in July, contributed £125.7 million of profits for the two months and four days to September 30. Its addition increased Bank of Ireland's asset base to £131.3 billion, from £119.4 billion.

Mr Keane, who is to become chief executive in January, said that he was interested in making further acquisitions in the UK so long as they complemented Bristol & West, such as another building society in the same region so that substantial cost savings could be made. Earlier this month, the bank took control of New Ireland, a pensions provider.

Temps, page 30

PRODUCT RECALL

AMSTEL BEER

(330 ML BOTTLE SIZE ONLY)



HP Bulmer regret to announce that small chips of glass have been found in a very small number of bottles of its UK manufactured Amstel beer.

All stockists have been alerted and asked to remove stock from their shelves.

Anybody who has bottles of Amstel beer in their possession is advised not to open the bottles and the beer should not be consumed. If you have affected bottles, please return them unopened to the store from which they were purchased for a full refund.

This announcement includes all bottles of Amstel, whether bought singly or in a multi pack. Only bottles of Amstel produced and packaged in the UK are affected.

We will replace all stocks of Amstel with newly produced product...

For further information please call: 0845 600 0500

Menvier chief to make £20m

By CHRIS AYRES

ROGER FLETCHER, deputy chairman and chief executive of Menvier-Swain, the electrical equipment group, stands to make £20.5 million through his personal holdings and his family's trust fund, if shareholders accept the offer currently being made for the company.

The £164.5 million cash offer, which Mr Fletcher has accepted, is being made by Cooper Industries, the US engineering group which manufactures Champion spark plugs.

The 310p per share bid, which represents a 51 per cent premium on the company's share price when the offer was made, has already secured 13.4 per cent of Menvier-Swain's equity, 4.5 per cent of which is held by Mr Fletcher and 8.2 per cent by his family's trust fund.

It is understood that no major shareholders have objected to the deal.

Mr Fletcher, who founded the company 25 years ago, said: "I am proud of the success that Menvier-Swain has enjoyed since its flotation in 1986 and believe that the company has a strong future as part of the Cooper group."

John Riley, chairman, president and chief executive of Cooper, said: "The acquisition is another important step in our long-term strategy to enter new markets and extend the global reach of Cooper's Electrical Products segment."

"It opens up several new market opportunities for us, with reputable brand names and access to markets and customers not currently served by Cooper."

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How Asia's financial typhoon could blow a cold wind west

Tokyo must stimulate its economy to avoid a return to 1929 mayhem

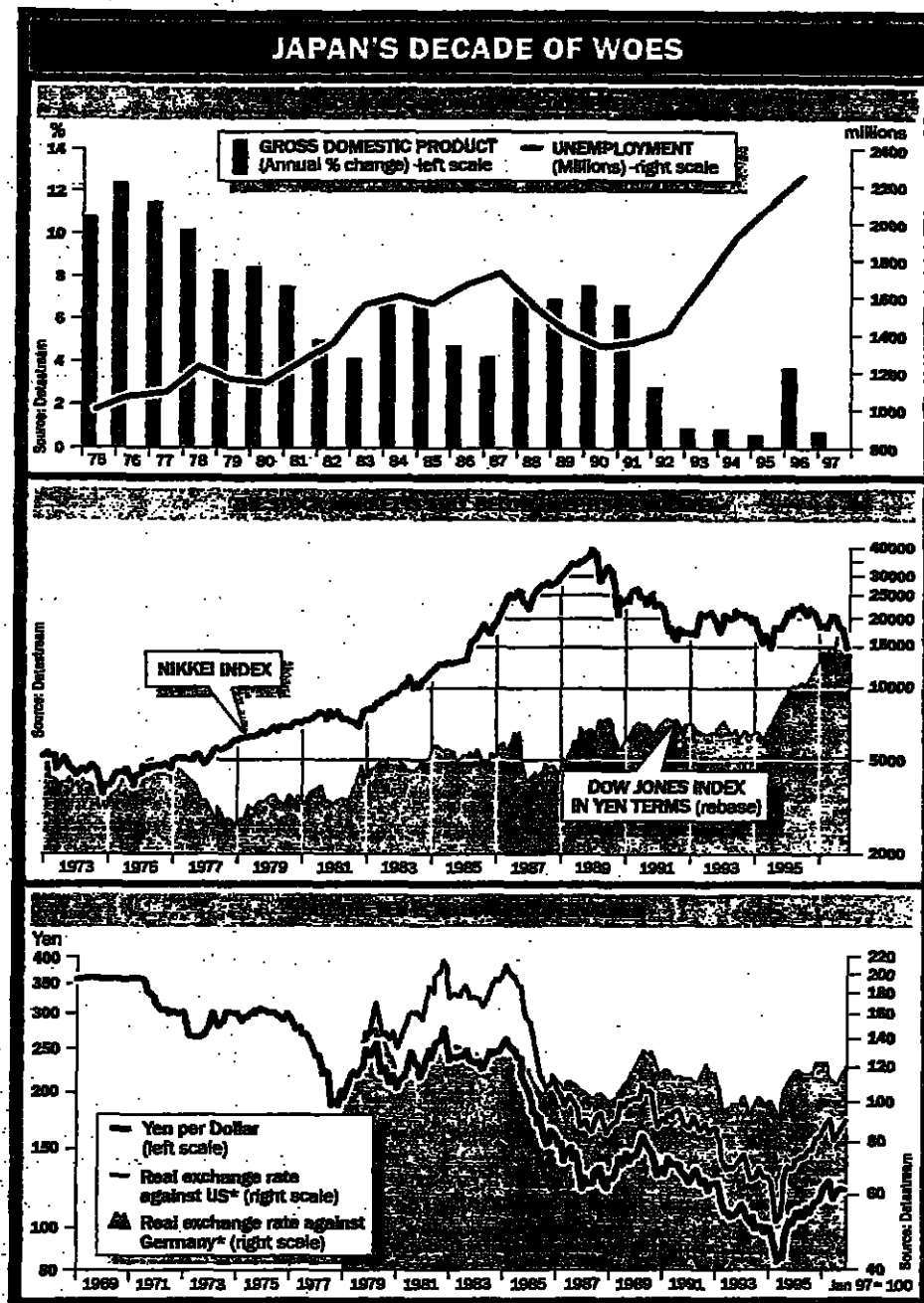
The last time this column discussed the Asian financial crisis (for once this time the question was whether the panic in such relatively insignificant economies as Malaysia and Thailand would spread to the one South-East Asian centre capable of seriously affecting the global economy — Hong Kong. The answer was predictable enough.

The Hang Seng index, at 15,000 on August 29, when this column last visited South-East Asia, has fallen 40 per cent in the past two months.

With the Hong Kong stock market wrecked, the financial typhoon turned north, hitting Taiwan and Korea. Both of these large and previously robust economies have now suffered devaluation and stock market collapse. With collateral evaporating and companies unable to service their foreign currency loans, bank panics have been the inevitable result. To make matters worse, many of the insolvent banks have turned out to be controlled by associates or relatives of local political leaders. As a result, the markets are starting to question the creditworthiness, not only of individual Thai, Korean and Indonesian banks and companies, but of the national governments themselves.

All this may be thoroughly unpleasant for western devotees of the "Asian miracle" who believed that the streets of Kuala Lumpur would soon be paved with gold, but what does it mean for the rest of the world? Yesterday, the US Congress asked the two economists whose views on this question really matter — Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and Larry Summers, the Deputy Secretary of the US Treasury in charge of international affairs. Reading between the lines, the mounting anxiety in Washington was clear.

Mr Greenspan pointed to three main channels through which the Asian crisis could hurt America and, by implication, Europe. The first channel is "financial contagion": the loss of confidence in emerging markets has spread financial problems to all emerging economies, not only in Asia but also in Latin America and Eastern Europe. Although Mr Greenspan will never say so, the collapse in emerging stock markets would not, on its own, have upset the Fed. Mr Greenspan noted almost a year ago that stock markets were



suffering from "irrational exuberance", and nowhere was the exuberance more irrational than in overpriced, speculative markets such as Malaysia and Hong Kong. To the extent that losses in emerging markets could instill some sobriety on Wall Street, the Fed may be quite content.

The trouble lies in the broader impact of collapsing equity prices on the economies of the Third World and Eastern Europe. In the long term, Mr Greenspan expressed a confidence in these economies, which seems almost certain to be justified. The reason for long-term confidence is not that Asia has discovered a miraculous new model of capitalism or that the people there are more disciplined, more respectful of authority or harder working. It is simply that Asia starts so far behind America and Europe.

As Mr Greenspan put it: "There is no reason that above-average growth in countries that are still in a position to gain from catching up with the prevailing technology cannot persist for a very long time." What investors now have to realise, however, is that the same "advantages" of technological backwardness and low

wages apply to much of Latin America, Eastern Europe and parts of Africa. At present these regions are inevitably being sucked into the financial maelstrom along with Asia, but when the crisis is over, they may emerge relatively stronger if the mystique of the "Asian miracle" disappears. The second channel of influence from the Asian crisis is the impact on world trade and therefore on economic growth in America and Europe.

This impact may be quite modest, not because the countries concerned are unimportant but because economic policymakers in America — and especially in Europe — are likely to respond to the Asian crisis by keeping interest rates lower than they otherwise would. Although Mr Greenspan emphasised that the countries at the heart of the crisis buy only a small fraction of US exports, he added that the loss of trade for America would become more serious as the loss of confidence spread to Latin America and other emerging regions. When Mr Greenspan says, as he did yesterday, that the impact of

events in Asia on the US economy will be "not negligible" or that the growth of US exports will "tend to be muted", he may be stating the obvious, but he is also confirming that, in setting American monetary policy, the Fed will take these deflationary forces fully into account. Whether policymakers in Europe and Britain prove equally sensible remains to be seen, but I suspect that the Bundesbank and the Bank of France are watching the turmoil in Asia every bit as carefully as the Fed. Many financial analysts currently view the global impact of the Asian crisis as a much bigger problem for America than for Europe, because America trades more with these countries than Europe and because American multinationals have derived an increasing share of their profits from the rapid growth of Asian markets for branded goods such as Coca-Cola, Intel microprocessors or Disney cartoons.

This is a misconception. For Europe — and especially for Germany — the loss of exports to Eastern Europe and Russia caused by the collapse of financial confidence in all emerging markets is almost as serious as

the loss of Latin markets is for the US. Worse still, Germany and France are particularly exposed in Asia because their exports are focused on heavy capital goods, infrastructure projects and luxury products. Sales of gas turbines and champagne to Malaysia and Thailand are likely to suffer even more than sales of Michael Jackson and Gillette razors. Furthermore, the European economies are more vulnerable than America to deflationary shocks, simply because their growth is entirely export-dependent and domestic demand remains weak. The Bundesbank should therefore be at least as alert to the dangers from Asia as is Mr Greenspan. If not, Europe could end up suffering far more than the US.

This observation brings me to the third major channel of influence from Asia to the global economy identified by Mr Greenspan. This is the desperately weak economy of Japan. Japan is now in its sixth year of economic stagnation. Its financial markets have suffered far worse damage than anything seen in the rest of Asia. Japanese share and property prices are still worth only 40 per cent of the peak levels they hit almost eight years ago (a cautionary lesson for anyone who believes that shares and property are always worth buying after a steep fall).

As the financial crisis moves from Hong Kong to Seoul to Tokyo, Japan's banks are again sliding towards insolvency, as they were in 1995. But this time insurance companies and stockbrokers are also on the brink of a precipice.

The Japanese Government's response to all these problems is to promise more "deregulation". But deregulation cannot deal with demand management problems, welcome though it would be. There is now only one sure way of pulling the Japanese economy back from this precipice: by applying a dose of Keynesian demand stimulus with an immediate tax cut, as argued on this page on September 26.

With a modest fiscal stimulus, confidence in the Japanese economy would be restored and the economy would rapidly recover. Such a recovery would more than offset all the damage done to the world economy by the problems in Korea, Malaysia and Hong Kong. But without a fiscal stimulus, the Asian financial crisis could do to Japan what the 1929 crash on Wall Street did to America.

The question now is whether Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, wants to go down in history as Japan's Herbert Hoover. So far, his indifference to economic danger suggests that he does. But Japanese governments have a long history of stepping up to the brink and pulling back just in time. If the Asian crisis finally forces the Japanese to look into the precipice, perhaps it will have done more good than harm.

Yahoo! puts Web in a spin with dynamic policy of expansion

Chris Ayres assesses the startling rise to prominence of an Internet service firm

Two years ago Yahoo! was one of many tiny loss-making Internet companies. It provided nothing more than a directory of Web sites with a catchy name, created by two geeky PhD students at Stanford University in America.

The turning point came when they hired Tim Koogle, then a 43-year-old former Motorola executive, who decided to turn Yahoo! into a heavyweight media company, funded entirely by advertising. Koogle is well on the way to achieving this, having teamed up with several other companies to provide a range of commercial services run alongside Yahoo!'s original news and directory site.

By allowing customers to use their credit cards online — they enter their details on a secure site run by the company — Yahoo! in the US now provides a share information and stock broking service, a travel information and booking service, and access to many other Internet shopping sites.

In the UK, Yahoo! has just launched a continuously updated share price site, with an online stock broking and travel service expected to follow next year. The company is also working on a UK site which allows people to buy and sell property and find rented accommodation.

The level of commercial confidence in Yahoo! was demonstrated at its stock market flotation last year, which made David Filo and Jerry Yang, its twenty-something founders, an estimated £90 million each. Since then, Yahoo!'s aggressive policy of expansion has helped it to break into profits, and boost its value to about £1.2 billion.

Everything about Yahoo! — including its enormous valuation — seems to be slightly surreal. The company's London office is so minimal and has so few staff it makes you wonder whether it actually exists. There is no marking on the door outside, apart from a tiny postage stamp-sized sticker displaying the company's cheerful logo.

Koogle fits the image perfectly. His name makes him sound like a character from a children's television series, and he punctuates every sentence with a burst of manic warbling laughter.

"In 1995 I got a call from a guy at a recruitment company who said he had a couple of smart kids, a good idea, and that they needed adult supervision," says Koogle. At the time, he was president of Intermet, a Seat-

purchases that are made after people have found product information on the Web, along with purchases actually done on the Web. Then the industry is probably pretty big," says Koogle. "I guess worldwide it's worth more than \$10 billion, probably way more than that."

Koogle inevitably supports the Government's current drive to get schools on the Internet, but says Yahoo! is not a political company and has not engaged in any lobbying. He sees more government intervention in the Web as inevitable, and worries that an Internet shopping tax could be imposed as the industry grows. He is only about his views on copyright law, which could be altered to prevent Web sites providing direct links to other sites.

He says: "I'm sure copyright laws will be updated, and some of it will be needed."

For the time being, Yahoo! is content to try to capture the burgeoning amounts of advertisers' money being pumped into the Internet, estimated to be £3 billion by the year 2000. He believes this will grow further as a new generation of Internet users emerges.

"It's interesting to watch how accepting young kids are of the computer," he says. "I was having dinner at my brother's house last month and his little five-year-old boy came bounding in saying 'Uncle Timmy, Uncle Timmy, I've just done an FTP transfer!' Of course, I knew what he was talking about, but my brother just looked at him like he was from the moon."



Tim Koogle gave up a 2,000-staff company for Yahoo!

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Bottle bank

WHICH would you rather do, work crucifying hours in investment banking until the ulcers stop you, or watch bottles of beer roll off the family production line? Money being no object of course.

Ian Molson, head of European investment banking at Credit Suisse First Boston, has just made the choice. Funny thing, I know, what with CIB's purchase of BZW, but he is leaving the firm for reasons quite unconnected with this week's purchase, to be replaced by Chris Carter. Molson had been at CIB for 20 years but is off to run the

family brewery of the same name in Montreal. He is staying in London, though. "Molson will be taking up a half to a third of my time." The rest, he is undecided on, but is enthusiastic about opportunities in Russia.

THE sad and unexpected death has been announced of James Miller, chairman of Wassall, at the age of 72. He was the father of chief executive Chris Miller, to whom our sympathies are extended. He had chaired what is about our last surviving successful conglomerate since 1988. Miller senior had an interesting sideline, I hear. He also chaired two family businesses, Hardy's and Harris & Sheldon. The former makes the best fishing tackle, the latter owns some of the best fishing water in the country, rights to a chunk of the Tweed including Junction Pool, which they tell me is the absolute Mecca for anglers. They will continue to be run by Chris's brother, Michael.

Ritz cracker

MOHAMED AL FAYED has fallen out big-time with a former marketing man, and the matter has gone to learned friends. Among Alan Duddle's



duties at the Fayad empire was brand development at the Paris Ritz, and he was fired from that job just four days before the tragic events of the end of August, having been booted out of Harrods three weeks before.

He is suing for wrongful dismissal and about half a year's salary, unspecified, from both employers. He only joined at the start of the year. His lawyers' statement says he was responsible both for the hotel and for something called the "Duke and Duchess of Windsor Brands", of which Harrods pleads absolute ignorance.

Duddle is out of the country, and no one is saying any more. The usual sources at Harrods say they are fighting the claim, and, intriguingly, issuing a counter-claim "to recover substantial damages".

Unusual, to say the least. This one could be fun.

Better view

NO ONE was in a better mood than Sir Robert Horton, the Railtrack chairman, yesterday as the shares closed above £10. He was almost beside himself — over the view from his new corner office on the 13th floor of Railtrack House in Euston Square. Gazing at the London skyline, Sir Bob spied the old BP building, where he was also once chairman. "I used to have an office in Britannia Tower, but I think the view is much better from here," he said. An understandable preference, given his involuntary departure from BP.

HELEN LIDDELL, Economic Secretary to the Treasury and scourge of the pensions industry, has a new nickname. Within the industry, it seems, she is known as Stalin's Granny. At yesterday's Building Societies Association lunch she disagreed with this, as you might expect. Her own researches, she said, suggested Stalin's granny was quite a nice old dear.

Stage apron

EMPLOYEES of the Really Useful Group thought Christmas had arrived early a few

days ago when a present from Lord Lloyd-Webber popped onto the doorman. My informant opened his with shaking hands. Inside was an apron, stamped with the gold portcullis logo of the House of Lords. Gosh. Just what he had always wanted. So practical. And so colourful. Its significance otherwise was rather lost, except to remind us all of the timesmith's ennoblement. I rang in search of enlightenment. Apparently the aprons are to commemorate a party last month for staff at the House of Lords to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Really Useful Group's formation. They came from the House of Lords gift shop.

MARTIN WALLER



Lord Lloyd-Webber has sent aprons to staff to commemorate 20 years



The 17.47 is delayed due to champagne bottles on the track

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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	1987	1986	%	1987	1986	%
High Line Category	Price	Unit	Change	Price	Unit	Change
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES						
328 40% Malted Barley	\$21	5	50 124	1987	1986	%
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447 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
448 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
449 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
450 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
451 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
452 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
453 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
454 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
455 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
456 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
457 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
458 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
459 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
460 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
461 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
462 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
463 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
464 360 Malt				1987	1986	%
ELECTRICITY						
429 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
430 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
431 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
432 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
433 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
434 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
435 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
436 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
437 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
438 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
439 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
440 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
441 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
442 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
443 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
444 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
445 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
446 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
447 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
448 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
449 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
450 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
451 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
452 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
453 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
454 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
455 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
456 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
457 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
458 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
459 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
460 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
461 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
462 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
463 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
464 360 Malt				1987	1986	%
ELECTRONIC & ELECT						
429 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
430 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
431 360 Malt	457	25	42 121	1987	1986	%
432 360 Malt	457					

1987						1987						1987						1987					
High	Low	Low Company	Price	+/-	%	High	Low	Low Company	Price	+/-	%	High	Low	Low Company	Price	+/-	%	High	Low	Low Company	Price	+/-	%
100	99	100	100	0	0	100	99	100	100	0	0	100	99	100	100	0	0	100	99	100	100	0	0
101	100	101	101	0	0	101	100	101	101	0	0	101	100	101	101	0	0	101	100	101	101	0	0
102	101	102	102	0	0	102	101	102	102	0	0	102	101	102	102	0	0	102	101	102	102	0	0
103	102	103	103	0	0	103	102	103	103	0	0	103	102	103	103	0	0	103	102	103	103	0	0
104	103	104	104	0	0	104	103	104	104	0	0	104	103	104	104	0	0	104	103	104	104	0	0
105	104	105	105	0	0	105	104	105	105	0	0	105	104	105	105	0	0	105	104	105	105	0	0
106	105	106	106	0	0	106	105	106	106	0	0	106	105	106	106	0	0	106	105	106	106	0	0
107	106	107	107	0	0	107	106	107	107	0	0	107	106	107	107	0	0	107	106	107	107	0	0
108	107	108	108	0	0	108	107	108	108	0	0	108	107	108	108	0	0	108	107	108	108	0	0
109	108	109	109	0	0	109	108	109	109	0	0	109	108	109	109	0	0	109	108	109	109	0	0
110	109	110	110	0	0	110	109	110	110	0	0	110	109	110	110	0	0	110	109	110	110	0	0
111	110	111	111	0	0	111	110	111	111	0	0	111	110	111	111	0	0	111	110	111	111	0	0
112	111	112	112	0	0	112	111	112	112	0	0	112	111	112	112	0	0	112	111	112	112	0	0
113	112	113	113	0	0	113	112	113	113	0	0	113	112	113	113	0	0	113	112	113	113	0	0
114	113	114	114	0	0	114	113	114	114	0	0	114	113	114	114	0	0	114	113	114	114	0	0
115	114	115	115	0	0	115	114	115	115	0	0	115	114	115	115	0	0	115	114	115	115	0	0
116	115	116	116	0	0	116	115	116	116	0	0	116	115	116	116	0	0	116	115	116	116	0	0
117	116	117	117	0	0	117	116	117	117	0	0	117	116	117	117	0	0	117	116	117	117	0	0
118	117	118	118	0	0	118	117	118	118	0	0	118	117	118	118	0	0	118	117	118	118	0	0
119	118	119	119	0	0	119	118	119	119	0	0	119	118	119	119	0	0	119	118	119	119	0	0
120	119	120	120	0	0	120	119	120	120	0	0	120	119	120	120	0	0	120	119	120	120	0	0
121	120	121	121	0	0	121	120	121	121	0	0	121	120	121	121	0	0	121	120	121	121	0	0
122	121	122	122	0	0	122	121	122	122	0	0	122	121	122	122	0	0	122	121	122	122	0	0
123	122	123	123	0	0	123	122	123	123	0	0	123	122	123	123	0	0	123	122	123	123	0	0
124	123	124	124	0	0	124	123	124	124	0	0	124	123	124	124	0	0	124	123	124	124	0	0
125	124	125	125	0	0	125	124	125	125	0	0	125	124	125	125	0	0	125	124	125	125	0	0
126	125	126	126	0	0	126	125	126	126	0	0	126	125	126	126	0	0	126	125	126	126	0	0
127	126	127	127	0	0	127	126	127	127	0	0	127	126	127	127	0	0	127	126	127	127	0	0
128	127	128	128	0	0	128	127	128	128	0	0	128	127	128	128	0	0	128	127	128	128	0	0
129	128	129	129	0	0	129	128	129	129	0	0	129	128	129	129	0	0	129	128	129	129	0	0
130	129	130	130	0	0	130	129	130	130	0	0	130	129	130	130	0	0	130	129	130	130	0	0
131	130	131	131	0	0	131	130	131	131	0	0	131	130	131	131	0	0	131	130	131	131	0	0
132	131	132	132	0	0	132	131	132	132	0	0	132	131	132	132	0	0	132	131	132	132	0	0
133	132	133	133	0	0	133	132	133	133	0	0	133	132	133	133	0	0	133	132	133	133	0	0
134	133	134	134	0	0	134	133	134	134	0	0	134	133	134	134	0	0	134	133	134	134	0	0
135	134	135	135	0	0	135	134	135	135	0	0	135	134	135	135	0	0	135	134	135	135	0	0
136	135	136	136	0	0	136	135	136	136	0	0	136	135	136	136	0	0	136	135	136	136	0	0
137	136	137	137	0	0	137	136	137	137	0	0	137	136	137	137	0	0	137	136	137	137	0	0
138	137	138	138	0	0	138	137	138	138	0	0	138	137	138	138	0	0	138	137	138	138	0	0
139	138	139	139	0	0	139	138	139	139	0	0	139	138	139	139	0	0	139	138	139	139	0	0
140	139	140	140	0	0	140	139	140	140	0	0	140	139	140	140	0	0	140	139	140	140	0	0
141	140	141	141	0	0	141	140	141	141	0	0	141	140	141	141	0	0	141	140	141	141	0	0
142	141	142	142	0	0	142	141	142	142	0	0	142	141	142	142	0	0	142	141	142	142	0	0
143	142	143	143	0	0	143	142	143	143	0	0	143	142	143	143	0	0	143	142	143	143	0	0
144	143	144	144	0	0	144	143	144	144	0	0	144	143	144	144	0	0	144	143	144	144	0	0
145	144	145	145	0	0	145	144	145	145	0	0	145	144	145	145	0	0	145	144	145	145	0	0
146	145	146	146	0	0	146	145	146	146	0	0	146	145	146	146	0	0	146	145	146	146	0	0
147	146	147	147	0	0	147	146	147	147	0	0	147	146	147	147	0	0	147	146	147	147	0	0
148	147	148	148	0	0	148	147	148	148	0	0	148	147	148	148	0	0	148	147	148	148	0	0
149	148	149	149	0	0	149	148	149	149	0	0	149	148	149	149	0	0	149	148	149	149	0	0
150	149	150	150	0	0	150	149	150	150	0	0	150	149	150	150	0	0	150	149	150	150	0	0
151	150	151	151	0	0	151	150	151	151	0	0	151	150	151	151	0	0	151	150	151	151	0	0
152	151	152	152	0	0	152	151	152	152	0	0	152	151	152	152	0	0	152	151	152	152	0	0
153	152	153	153	0	0	153	152	153	153	0	0	153	152	153	153	0	0	153	152	153	153	0	0
154	153	154	154	0	0	154	153	154	154	0	0	154	153	154	154	0	0	154	153	154	154	0	0
155	154	155	155	0	0	155	154	155	155	0	0	155	154	155	155	0	0	155	154	155	155	0	0
156	155	156	156	0	0	156	155	156	156	0	0	156	155	156	156	0	0	156	155	156	156	0	0
157	156	157	157	0	0	157	156	157	157	0	0	157	156	157	157	0	0	157	156	157	157	0	0
158	157	158	158	0	0	158	157	158	158	0	0	158	157	158	158	0	0	158	157	158	158	0	0
159	158	159	159	0	0	159	158	159	159	0	0	159	158	159	159	0	0	159	158	159	159	0	0
160	159	160	160	0	0	160	159	160	160	0	0	160	159	160	160	0	0	160	159	160	160	0	0
161	160	161	161	0	0	161	160	161	161	0	0	161	160	161	161	0	0	161	160	161	161	0	0
162	161	162	162	0	0	162	161	162	162	0	0	162	161	162	162	0	0	162	161	162	162	0	0
163	162	163	163	0	0	163	162	163	163	0	0	163	162	163	163	0	0	163	162	163	163	0	0
164	163	164	164	0	0	164	163	164	164	0	0	164	163	164	164	0	0	164	163	164	164	0	0
165	164	165	165	0	0	165	164	165	165	0	0	165	164	165	165	0	0	165	164	165	165	0	0
166	165	166	166	0	0	166	165	166	166	0	0	166	165	166	166	0	0	166	165	166	166	0	0
167	166	167	167	0	0	167	166	167	167	0	0	167	16										

[illegible]

Rank	Firm	Company	1989 Sales \$ mil.	% Chg.	% NE
129	48	1989	199	2	123
130	48	1989	199	2	123
131	48	1989	199	2	123
132	48	1989	199	2	123
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372	48	1989	199	2	123
373	48	1989	199	2	123
374	48	1989	199	2	123
375	48	1989	199		

£1,000 to be won

Check the numbers on your Portfolio card and find your eight stocks in the Portfolio panel below. In the column provided next to your eight shares enter the share movements as published on this page. Ignore fractions, ie enter 16½ as 16 (the symbol ∞ means no change). After listing the price changes of your eight shares, add or subtract as appropriate to find your total which can be plus or minus. If your overall total matches exactly the points required for the daily dividend you win or share the £1,000 daily prize.

No	Company	Group	Gen Sec
1	West Healthcare	Healthcare	
2	Peterhouse	Bld & Cons	
3	Willis Corn	Insurance	
4	Rank Grp	Leisure	
5	Guttness	Alc Bev	
6	Yorkshire	Water	
7	Pluckington	Bld Maint	
8	Brianston WS	Sup Serv	
9	Gibson	Chemicals	
10	Bridgt-Gandy	Textiles	
12	Character Grp	Leisure	
13	London & Man	Insurance	
14	Critchley	Electronic	
15	Nat West	Banks	
16	EMAP	Media	
17	Aldi Domecq	Alc Bev	
18	Dhons Grp	Rat Gen	
19	Gerrard	Oil Fin	
20	Shell	Oil & Gas	
21	Ref for Bdr	Breweries	
22	Berkford Int	Engineering	
23	Bateman	Food	
24	Stevens	Food	
25	Dalmeida Ests	Produce	
26	Lon O'S Fin	Transport	
27	Dry Cry Grp	Food Man	
28	Johnson Chn	Sup Serv	
29	Brown (N)	Rat Gen	
30	Wintrust	Oil Fin	
31	Arvis Ref	Transport	
32	Centrica	Oil & Gas	
33	Dairy Fin Grp	Rat Food	
34	Lavendon	Sup Serv	
35	Davis Serv	Sup Serv	
36	Microgen	Sup Serv	
37	Safeway	Ret Food	
38	Strirling Grp	Textiles	
39	Dart	Transport	
40	GLS	Rat Gen	
41	Rio Tinto	Mining	
42	Heveson	Bld Maint	
43	Energy Grp	Water	

+38

Claims required for +38 pts
Claimants should ring
0171-481 3388
between 9.30am-3pm

Weekly Dividend

£5,000.						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Weekly accumulator total						

Two winners shared the prize yesterday, each receiving £500. They are: K Handley, Glossop, Derbyshire; C Wharton, Stokesby, Nr Great Yarmouth.

[illegible]

52	169% Air London	217%	37
32%	350% All Nippon Air	280% - 5%	0.5
44	229% Anhe	349	45

147	Atlantic Nat'l Bank	279	0	37
148	Bank of America	279	0	37
149	Bank of Boston	279	0	37
150	Bank of Montreal	279	0	37
151	Bank of New York	279	0	37
152	Bank of the South	279	0	37
153	Bank of the West	279	0	37
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197	Bank of the Republic	279	0	37
198	Bank of the Empire	279	0	37
199	Bank of the North	279	0	37
200	Bank of the South	279	0	37

WATER

203	East Surrey	780	+	3.8	1
204	Hyde	880	+	5.2	1
101	Hyder Cn Pk	713	+	6.2	1
52	Ind Knt Hops	632	+	5.9	1
603	Shavers Trust	877	+	5.5	1
2735	South Staff	3162	+	7.9	1
596	South West	871	+	5.5	1
593	Thames	878	+	5.2	1
605	Uel (Dulles)	719	+	5.5	1
244	Worce	487	+	4.5	1
325	Yorkshire	457	+	5.1	1

1%	33%	Freepages	1325	3.1	1
9%	69	Mogulmania	69	0.4	3
5	22%	Mogulmania	22	0.4	3

280 Polon Rail	312	...	0.2
732 ¹ / ₂ Ramon Egg	795	...	3.3
619 ¹ / ₂ Southwest News	747 ¹ / ₂	...	3.5
65 ¹ / ₂ Southwest Vacat	74 ¹ / ₂	...	20 ¹ / ₂
17 ¹ / ₂ Tencaster	20 ¹ / ₂	...	

... No significant date. Comparison in hold
of the FTSE 100 index.

THE TIMES
Portfolio
£1.000 to be won

FKI deal fails to rouse City

FKI, the engineering group, yesterday said that the long-awaited sale of its automotive division would raise £92.5 million — significantly less than the City expected. FKI shares fell 4½p, to 187p, against a high of 215p last month.

The division will be sold to Trident Automotive, a management-led company backed by Philpotts Ventures and UBS.

FKI said the sale would allow it to concentrate on its core activities of material handling, hardware and electrical engineering. Proceeds of the sale would be used to reduce group gearing to below 60 per cent, it said. FKI has spent about £500 million on acquisitions in the past two years.

Warner slips

Pre-tax profits of Warner Howard, the distributor of commercial laundry and hygiene equipment, fell to £3.26 million (£3.95 million) in the half year to August 31 after a £590,000 exceptional charge against ending the catering activities. Earnings per share fell to 9.28p (10.94p). A dividend rise to 3.85p, from 3.5p, was said to reflect confidence in the future.

Porter payout

Porter Chadburn, the label maker, is lifting its interim dividend by 20 per cent, to 0.5p, after an 18 per cent rise in pre-tax profits, to £2.7 million, in the half year to September 26. Earnings per share rose by 5.5 pence to 1.74p. Turnover from continuing operations rose 11 per cent, to £39.5 million.

Water chief stirs debate on fat cats

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

SOUTH WEST WATER yesterday claimed that low pay is deterring would-be chief executives of the company as it struggles to find a new head after nearly a year of searching.

Ken Harvey, non-executive chairman, yesterday fuelled the debate about fat-cat salaries in the utilities by saying: "For certain people, salary is a problem." He added that he had interviewed about a dozen candidates and that "a lot of people" had been seen at a lower level.

South West Water began seeking a chief executive after Keith Court, the former executive chairman, said that he wanted to leave the company late last year. He had been planning to retire for some time, but stayed on while South West defended itself against bids from Severn Trent and Wessex Water.

Mr Harvey, who was appointed to his £84,000 role in January, has said that the new chief executive will not be paid as much as Mr Court, who, in his final year, received £172,000 after bonuses boosted a basic salary of £127,000.

Mr Harvey, a former chief executive of Norweb, said that the new person needed a mixture of utilities experience and customer awareness.

South West yesterday announced a move into the nascent competitive water market in a joint venture with Enviro-Logic, a water engineer. South West is paying £450,000 for 50 per cent of Enviro-Logic, with the two working in a joint venture that will focus on providing water for companies, mainly by exploiting untapped resources such as boreholes. It also hopes to provide

water to hospitals and other large users. Enviro-Logic has 29 applications with the water regulator to open up new sources to serve companies or to act as a broker to offer water from outside potential clients' areas.

South West may be close to pulling out of a joint venture in Italy, which would leave it with a £7 million loss. The company said that its interest in Siba, a water business, was under review because of the Italian Government's slow progress in delivering operating concessions.

South West's pre-tax profits for the half year to September 30 remained at £68 million if exceptional items, such as bid defence costs and profits from disposals, are stripped out of the previous year's figures. Its interim dividend, due on April 6, rises 11.9 per cent, to 13.2p. The company said that it wanted expansion of its non-regulated businesses to help to fund future dividend growth.



Ken Harvey, left, yesterday with Ken Hill, finance director of South West Water

Utilities turn off fewer taps

DISCONNECTIONS of water customers halved in the first half of this year, according to the industry regulator (Christine Buckley writes).

Just under 1,000 homes — a rate of one per 20,000 households — were cut off for non-payment of bills. The latest figures mark the sixth consecutive year that disconnections

have fallen. Ian Byatt, the regulator, said: "Disconnections are now at a very low level — and well below the level recorded before privatisation."

Mr Byatt has been pressing water companies to explore all options before disconnecting supplies. He said: "Developing the range of payment

options available, as well as maintaining early and effective contact, reduces the need for disconnection. This should only be a last resort."

Seven companies made no disconnections in the period: Cholderton Water, Mid Southern, South East, South West, Southern, Tending Hundred and Wessex.

Scapa blames sterling for dip in profits

By MARTIN BARROW

THE strength of sterling cost Scapa Group almost £5 million in the first half of the year, the company said yesterday.

The manufacturer of industrial products, primarily for the paper industry, suffered a decline in pre-tax profits to £29.2 million, from £30.2 million, in the six months to September 30, which was blamed on the volatile foreign exchange market.

Scapa said adverse currency movements reduced the translation of overseas earnings into sterling by about £2.9 million. A further £2 million was considered to be a conservative estimate of the impact on exports, imports and domestic market prices. Reported earnings fell to 8.4p a share, from 8.6p, but would have been virtually unchanged at constant exchange rates.

Scapa earns the vast majority of its profits outside the UK. In the six-month period, UK operating profits fell to £4.4 million, from £7.8 million. The rest of Europe contributed £10.6 million (£8.1

million). North America £17.7 million (£17.7 million) and other countries £1.1 million (£1.4 million).

David Dunn, chief executive, said papermaking products and services, which accounts for almost half of sales and more than 50 per cent of profits, saw underlying profit growth of about 7 per cent.

Mr Dunn welcomed the continued consolidation taking place in the pulp and paper industry, which is leading to a smaller number of global players in the sector. In October, Scapa merged its own North American and European paper machine clothing divisions under one management team.

Second-half prospects were encouraging, said Mr Dunn, assuming no further strengthening of sterling. However, even at these levels, the strong pound would continue to be a negative factor.

The interim dividend is increased 6.8 per cent to 2.05p a share. The shares fell 10p to 233½p yesterday.

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FINANCIAL APPOINTMENTS

Now in

THE SUNDAY TIMES

مركزاً من راحم

THE TIMES FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 1997

[illegible]

FOR WOMEN

Convention applies to any insurer

Jordan Grand Prix Ltd v Baltic Insurance Group and Others
Baltic Insurance Group Ltd v Jordan Grand Prix Ltd and Others

Before Lord Justice Staughton, Lord Justice Ognon and Lord Justice Robert Walker
 [Judgment October 24]
 Article 11 of the Convention on Jurisdiction and the Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters, signed at Brussels in 1968, by which an insurer could bring proceedings only in the courts of the contracting state in which the defendant was domiciled, was not limited to insurers domiciled in contracting states. It applied to any insurer, wherever domiciled, who sought to bring proceedings against a defendant in the courts of a contracting state when the defendant was domiciled in another contracting state.

Insurance Group, the plaintiff by counterclaim, against a decision of Mr Justice Langley on October 31, 1996 that the court had no jurisdiction to determine the claims of Baltic, a Lithuanian corporation, against the sixth to eighth defendants, Quay Financial Software Ltd, Mr Desmond Desmond and Mr Gerard Giblin, who were not plaintiffs in the original action. Mr Desmond and Mr Giblin, who were both domiciled in the Republic of Ireland, were directors of Quay, an Irish company.

An English company, Jordan Grand Prix Ltd, the plaintiff in the original action, ran a motor racing team. Jordan claimed it had agreed to make bonus payments to its employees if it finished in the top six of the 1994 FIA Formula 1 Constructors' world championship. That contingent liability Jordan alleged was insured with Baltic through managing agents in Belgium.

Quay alleged that it agreed to sponsor Jordan's team and to make sponsorship payments contingent on the team finishing in the top six. That liability Quay claimed was also insured with Baltic.

In the 1994 championship Jordan finished fifth. Baltic refused to pay the claims of Jordan and Quay, alleging conspiracy by Jordan, Quay and other defendants to the counterclaim to defraud Baltic. Jordan issued the writ in this action against Baltic claiming money due under the alleged insurance. Quay brought proceedings against Baltic in Belgium.

In its defence to that action Baltic challenged the validity of the insurance contracts and counterclaimed damages for conspiracy and fraud against Jordan and Quay. Mr Desmond and Mr Giblin were said to have been parties to the conspiracy.

Quay, Mr Desmond and Mr Giblin applied under Order 12, rule 8 of the Rules of the Supreme Court for the action against them to be dismissed on the ground that the court had no jurisdiction to determine Baltic's claims against them.

After argument restricted to issues arising under article 11, with any issues arising under articles 21 and 22 of the Brussels Convention reserved, Mr Justice Langley dismissed the action against Quay, Mr Desmond and Mr Giblin for want of jurisdiction.

Salary in lieu of notice taxable as emolument

EMI Group Electronics Ltd v Coldicott (Inspector of Taxes)
 Before Mr Justice Neuberger
 [Judgment October 22]

A payment of the equivalent of salary in lieu of notice made by an employer to an employee on termination of his employment was taxable as an emolument under Schedule E.

Mr Justice Neuberger so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division dismissing an appeal by EMI Group Electronics Ltd from a determination of the special commissioners that income tax should have been deducted by the company from payments made by it to two former senior employees under the terms of their contracts of employment.

Mr Michael Flesch, QC and Mr Conrad McDonnell, QC, for Mr Laurence Henderson, QC, and Mr Timothy Brennan for the Crown.

Mr Justice Neuberger said that EMI's senior employees were employed under contracts providing that the company had the right to make a payment to an employee on terminating his employment of the equivalent of salary in lieu of notice.

The question was whether such a payment made to two senior employees whose employments were terminated was taxable under Schedule E in the light of section 19(1) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 which provided that tax under Schedule E "shall be charged in respect of any office or employment or emoluments therefrom". If it was not so taxable then, it was agreed that section 148 of the Act, which would apply.

Clearly payments in lieu of notice were emoluments. The crucial issue dividing the parties was whether they were "therefrom", that is, were from the relevant employment.

For EMI it was argued that a distinction had to be made between payments made by employers as an inducement to becoming an employee, for being an employee or for having been an employee, all of which were taxable, and payments, such as a payment in lieu of notice, for ceasing or having ceased to be an employee which were not taxable because such payments did not arise from employment rather they arose from the disappearance of the employment.

The issue could thus be shortly expressed and easily understood but its resolution was not so simple. As per Lord Radcliffe in *Hochstrasser v Mayes* (1960) AC 376, 391 and Lord Woolf in *Mairs v Haughey* (1994) 1 AC 303, 320.

Notes for brokers

Aneco Reinsurance Underwriting Ltd (in liquidation) v Johnson and Higgins

It was highly desirable that means be found of recording, in a form which precluded later dispute, what was said between brokers and underwriters at the time of presentation of risk.

Mr Justice Cresswell so stated in a reserved judgment in the Commercial Court of the Queen's Bench Division on August 1 when allowing *Aneco Reinsurance Underwriting Ltd's* claim for damages from Johnson and Higgins for breach of contractual duty of care and negligence in relation to the placement of reinsurance contracts.

HIS LORDSHIP said it was highly desirable in the interests of justice, and of avoiding unnecessary cost and delay, that, whenever practicable, claims over insurance against brokers be heard at the same time and by the same tribunal that determined whether underwriters had validly avoided the contract.

After reviewing the authorities the conclusion was that a payment in lieu of notice was an emolument "from" the employment.

First, it was a payment, albeit contingently due to the employee under his contract of employment. That was clearly

neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition.

However, it was a relevant consideration, not only as a matter of common sense but also in light of observations in *Hochstrasser*, in *Laidler* and in *Hunter v Dewhurst* (1932) 16 TC 605, 611. It was a factor suggesting that a payment in lieu of notice derived from the employment and was part of the package of benefits which EMI as prospective employer, offered to an employee to induce him to take the employment.

Second, the receipt of a payment in lieu of notice arose "from the existence of the employer/employee relationship and not... from something else": see per Lord Oliver of Aylmer in *Gray v Bess* (1989) 1 WLR 167, 176. The terms on which an employment contract could be brought to an end were self-evidently an inherent part of the contractual relationship.

Taxation appeal is rehearing

Vandersteen v Agius and Another


An appeal on taxation of county court costs from the decision of a district judge to a circuit judge under Order 13, rule 1(10) of the County Court Rules (SI 1981 No 1678 L20) was a complete rehearing. The circuit judge was not obliged to follow the discretion of the district judge.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Staughton and Sir Christopher Slade) so stated on October 16 when dismissing the appeal of the Legal Aid Board against the decision of Judge Tibber at Edmonton County Court on September 2, 1996 upholding the decision of District Judge Silverman on February 29, 1996 to disallow the whole of the legally aided plaintiff's bill of costs.

LORD JUSTICE STAUGHTON said that under Order 62, rule 2(8) of the Rules of the Supreme Court, incorporated into the County Court Rules by

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Rodney Hobson introduces a two-page report on the success of British consultants, who earned £2.4 billion in overseas markets last year

Global demand and record fees for consultants

Asian turmoil, the strong pound, protectionism... these are potentially tough times for Britain's consultants.

Many will have watched the crash of currencies and stock markets in countries such as Thailand and Malaysia with some trepidation. East Asia and the Pacific brought in fees worth more than £1 billion for members of the British Consultants Bureau (BCB) in its latest financial year to March and South Asia added a further £163 million.

Despite the takeover by China, Hong Kong is still an important source of revenue and a gateway to China so the 25 per cent fall in one week on the Hang Seng Index was bad for the consultants' nerves.

Colin Adams, executive director of the BCB, says: "Events in Asia could dent our fee earning, not right now but perhaps in a year's time. Mega projects such as toll roads are predicated on the strength of industry and there is bound to be a downturn unless markets settle down."

The importance of Asia is demonstrated by the fact that 49 firms worked in Malaysia in 1996-97, more than any other country. India, Indonesia and Hong Kong were in the top seven countries using British consultants.

Fortunately, British consultants have come into these testing times from a position of strength. Fees earned by bureau members in the 1996-97 year soared 19 per cent to a record £2.4 billion.

Each year BCB members fail to find work in just a handful of countries. Last year was no exception: only Haiti, Afghanistan and Francophone Djibouti missed out on British expertise.

Last month alone bureau members announced that they had won 72 overseas contracts. They included assessing the safety of heavily used bridges in Bahrain, improving the water supply in Dhaka, monitoring air traffic control in Bulgaria and helping to complete the Nicosia sewage treatment scheme, halted when hostilities broke out in 1974.

However, Gill Monaghan, bureau chairman, said in her annual report in September: "The competitive environment in which our member companies have operated during the past 12 months has become much keener and has inevitably taken its toll on some businesses."

The worry for consultants is that dangers do not surface

industry, has been redefined to assisting firms and individual members in winning projects worldwide. Second, it is stepping up its lobbying in Westminster and Brussels. Keeping European funded projects open is crucial.

The bureau is also putting more emphasis on training, especially in helping British consultants to write proposals for contracts. More controversially, this includes training foreign consultants. Mr Adams says: "I think you are far more likely to create partners out of your former pupils than to create rivals." Partnerships could be crucial, since contracts are increasingly being awarded to consortiums. International financial institutions prefer to award work to groups with at least a 40 per cent local content.

Partnerships can also help British consultants to get round the insidious drift towards protectionism in European projects through an unofficial quota system. Continental consultants, angered at the appearance of two or three British consultants on most shortlists for work within developing countries and countries in transition, are pressing for a greater share of the pie.

One way round the impasse is to launch joint bids with, say, Swedish consultants who occupy a comparatively low rung on the ladder. This arrangement keeps Brussels happy, since it improves the Swedish quota, keeps the Swedes sweet and keeps the British on top of the pile.

Consultants are often criticised by British engineers and manufacturers for remaining impartial in their advice to overseas clients and refusing to push a pro-British line. Mr Adams argues that UK companies could be more alert to the opportunities.

He says: "Often a consultant will go in, make up a specification in English using British measures giving British companies an advantage yet the take-up by British industry is disappointing. There is no excuse."



The traditional and colourful life of Yemen is transforming as modern industry attracts workers to the developing entrepreneurial urban areas

Visit offers eastern promise

Colin Adams on the royal status given to a trip to Yemen by a delegation led by the Duke of Gloucester

The Republic of Yemen has not been visited by a trade mission for several years. As a result, recent British Consultants Bureau (BCB)/Middle East Association visit led by the Duke of Gloucester, the president of the BCB, was very well received and given enormous publicity.

It was regarded by the Yemennites as the first official royal visit since the Queen visited in 1952, and accorded similar status.

There are a large number of potential projects in Yemen for British consultants who, despite major political upheavals, have worked continuously in various parts of the country over the years and are highly regarded.

Aden, the former British protectorate, though war-ravaged, is still recognisable as the place I knew 33 years ago, but it is being slowly developed, notably as a major container port.

The large Russian presence of the Eighties is now reduced to the Consul, his daughter

and two others. Ta'izz, in the central region of the country, which closely resembles Cyprus in climate and vegetation, is rapidly becoming a major entrepreneurial centre. However, with mass movement from village to town and large-scale development, it is Sana, the capital, that presents consultants with the greatest challenges.

The city faces acute shortages of clean water, electrical power and modern effective organisations to manage the country's transition.

Our seminar and workshops in Sana, which were attended by representatives of the World Bank and other funding agencies, highlighted the difficulties British firms now face in many parts of the world. There is a strong wish on the part of developing nations and the international funding agencies to use British consultants.

They regularly get short-listed and at times fail the final selection, not on quality or price, but because rival international consultants have stronger financial backing from their governments.

British consultancy has developed over the years into a much more finely tuned independent sector of industry compared with others. In the majority of countries, consultancy tends to be merely a department within manufacturing or contracting companies, rather than an entity in its own right.

For many years the independence of British consultancies has tended to be one of its major strengths and this is well-known throughout the world. As the positive BCB statistics demonstrate, it is this independence, coupled with professionalism and know-how, that enable our consultants to regularly win projects. However, there is no doubt that the game is becoming harder when so much bilateral

financial assistance is made available from elsewhere. In her White Paper on Development, Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, was right to highlight the need for greater co-ordinated action between the international funding agencies and donor countries to ensure that aid-giving is properly targeted and appropriate.

Far too often, the recipients of aid play one country off against another, or put too much emphasis in one particular aspect or region. As a result, consulting advice, design or management may not be the most professional or cost effective.

Much of the potential difficulty for British consultants lies in the interpretation, by most countries in the world, of the relationship between aid and trade. Again, the White Paper has done a great deal to clarify the issue, inject a note of realism and highlight the benefits for those involved in

aid of working more directly with private business. Aid should be given, justifiably, to those most in need.

But it would be good if at the same time it engenders goodwill for the donor country and results in increased trade and communication between recipient and donor.

The verdict of British consultants on both the government White Paper on Development and the parallel exercise undertaken by the Department of Trade and Industry on sharpening up the support and organisation for trade is very positive. The BCB was consulted in depth in the preparation of both documents.

Clearly, after the publication of the White Paper, there was disappointment on the part of the BCB that the aid and trade provision was not retained. There will be some impact on British consultants working internationally, particularly those in infrastructure, but it is the contractors and those in procurement who will be most affected.

● The author is the executive director of the British Consultants Bureau.

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Sue Spenceley Burch profiles six winners of this year's awards whose expertise has touched the lives of millions throughout the world

The bridge that beats typhoons

Lantau Link — Mott MacDonald Category A (tangible visible projects)

A remarkable road and rail link — the largest of its kind to carry highway and railway traffic — has won the British Consultancy Firm of the Year award for Mott MacDonald.

The Lantau Link provides access from Hong Kong and Kowloon to the former colony's new port and airport on Lantau Island and its two bridges will be the first structures to provide a truly all-weather crossing, even in the area's typhoon winds.

As the Hong Kong Government's engineer, Mott MacDonald has conceived, planned, designed, managed and co-ordinated the £780 million project in record time. Construction was completed in five years.

The two new bridges — the Tsing Ma suspension bridge with a main span of 4,590ft, and Kap Shui Mun cable-stayed bridge with a main span of 1,431ft — now link the mainland with Lantau. Each carries a six-lane highway, twin railway tracks and two emergency road lanes on a sheltered lower level.

Mott MacDonald, the multi-disciplinary engineering consultancy, began work late in 1989. Between then and May 1992, when construction began, the firm produced the design and advised the Hong Kong highways department on procurement and prepared the contract documentation.

The design was a considerable challenge — Hong Kong experiences very severe tropical storms and winds up to 180mph. The railway's geometrical and operational requirements strongly influenced the layout of Tsing Ma's spans, and the air corridor for the airport restricted lower heights.

The bridge also straddles the deep Ma Wan channel, the only access route for ocean-going ships serving the Pearl River delta in China. A long span bridge, rather than tunnels, was the only option.

Chris Davis, Mott MacDonald's director in charge of long-span bridges, says: "Our solution was an extremely compact steel two-level deck with stainless steel aerodynamic fairings — the first of its kind to combine streamlining to minimise drag, and venting to enhance stability."

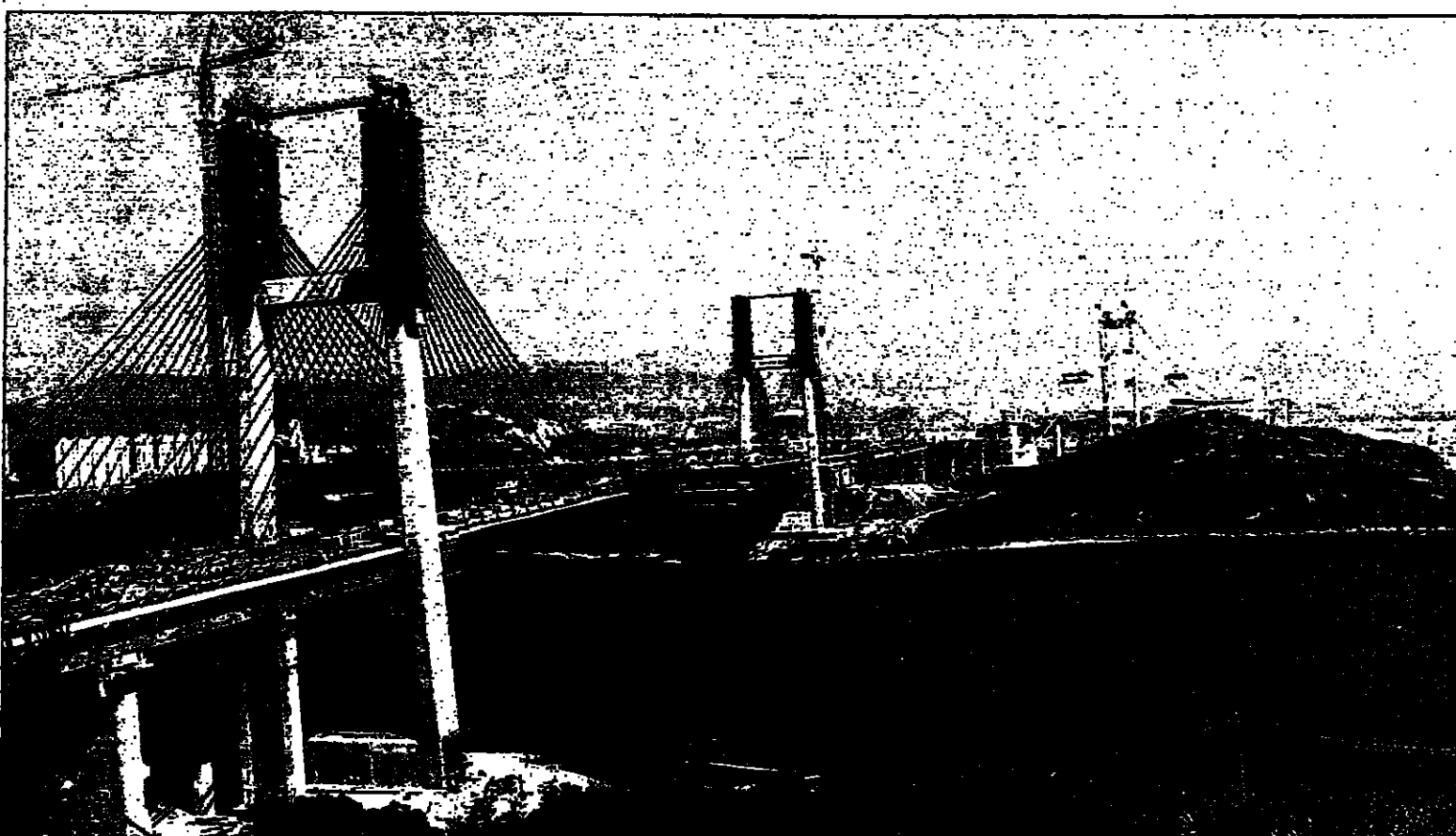
The Hong Kong Government also set high standards for the comfort of train passengers, which required equally innovative track design to minimise noise and vibration.

Once construction began, Mott MacDonald's role shifted to contract management and site supervision, and overseeing component manufacture in Britain, Dubai, Japan, China and Australia. The speed of construction stimulated some remarkable engineering.

ing. The Tsing Ma deck units, for example, were five times heavier than any lifted before.

Using a totally new approach to strand jacking — a technique which uses four jacks attached to the bridge's suspension cables of the bridge — Anglo Japanese Construction, a consortium of UK companies Kvaerner and Costain, and the Japanese firm Mitsui, broke records when they lifted the 1,000-ton deck units into place.

Mr Davis said: "The Lantau Link has created a spectacular gateway to the new airport and provided a landmark for Hong Kong's people to take pride in — a powerful symbol for the future."



Kap Shui Mun Bridge under construction: the world's biggest road and rail link provides a spectacular gateway to Hong Kong's new airport

Togliatti — Produce Studies Ltd Category A (tangible, visible projects)

TOGLIATTI, around 600 miles southeast of Moscow, is a city of one million people, best known for producing the Lada car. Like many cities in the former Soviet Union, until recently it had no efficient food distribution system.

The demise of communism brought about the dismantling of state-controlled food production, distribution and retailing systems throughout the country. Attempts by Western governments and aid agencies to fill the gap failed.

One of the main problems was the need for capital investment — often as much as \$2.5 (£1.5 million). Like most Russian cities, Togliatti could not afford it.

In 1994 the European Commission asked Produce Studies of Newbury, Berkshire, to look at the problem. Divisional director Peter Killick explains: "There was a misconception that whole-sale markets had to be large



The Togliatti market

and therefore needed substantial investment. Our capital funds to stimulate a market in Togliatti amounted to just £10,000.

"Additional costs had to be met by the city. This meant we were forced to deliver all the benefits of a traditional wholesale market for no more than the cost of a family car."

Produce Studies looked at how wholesale markets de-

veloped in England around 100 years ago. The key factor was bringing traders together in one place. "From this premise we designed a programme of affordable development, using a former food store, and bolted on secondary market facilities when the market could afford them," says Mr Killick.

This enabled the Togliatti wholesale market to develop in months rather than decades. Today the market has 120 private traders, with combined sales of more than £80 million a year. It supplies more than 50 per cent of the city's food, has significantly increased the range of products available and reduced prices through improved efficiency and more open pricing mechanisms, both of which result from healthy competition.

The European Commission also asked Produce Studies to write a technical handbook. Thirteen Russian cities followed the book — creating new companies and job opportunities. All their markets are now in profit.

Land Management, Poland — Llewellyn-Davies Category B (organisational or non-visual)

UNDER communist rule, those who worked in the planning departments of Polish municipalities knew where they were. The State dictated what was built and that was that.

In the free-market economy unexpected challenges arose. The wishes of private developers, keen to replace Poland's dated and unsuitable mass-produced housing, now needed balancing with the community's democratic rights.

In 1992 the British Gov-

ernment's Know How Fund, which helps former communist countries of Eastern Europe in the move to democracy, recruited Llewellyn-Davies, a British consultancy, to introduce the planning systems used here.

David Walton, its managing director, says: "Our approach was to show how planners in the West work, and how to put in place standards against which developers' applications could be measured. It had to be democratic."

In rural areas farmers who once grew what the state dictated can now choose what they grow. There is also potential for a tourist industry. Farmers can provide holiday accommodation and local authorities can turn natural resources such as a lake or skiing area into tourist destinations.

Llewellyn-Davies' first step was to produce a good manual and then set up a nationwide training course for local authority land management professionals and local politicians.

Within two years more than 900 local government staff and politicians had been trained.

didn't have a phone for eight months.

The area was under military occupation until May 1994, but clashes continued. "Every time, the Gaza Strip would be sealed off by the Israelis and material or people would be stranded," Mr Morrison says.

The construction provided work in a region with 60 per cent unemployment. Anything that could be made locally was.

The hospital's water supply now travels over three miles and a generator provides on site electricity. The building work was completed in 1996.

"It's such an achievement, it's so beautiful," Mr Morrison says. "People who visit really like the architectural treatment. It's basically a British-standard hospital, adapted to fit the climate and relating in some degree to regional architecture."

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT



The finished hospital

Work started in November 1993. The area was under Israeli occupation and there were strikes, curfews and clashes. A lot of people were getting shot," Mr Morrison says. "We

Tequila — Euro PA Associates Category B (organisational or non-visible projects)

LIKE many successful consumer products, tequila has, in the past, fallen victim to counterfeiters. Now, with the help of Euro PA Associates — an international agri-food and drink consultancy — agreement has been reached between Mexico and the European Union to protect the name.

Tequila originated from a Mexican Indian drink made by fermenting blue agave, a cactus-like plant. In the 16th century, Spanish soldiers introduced distillation, and production of the spirit began in the district of Tequila. Today about 40 distilleries produce 66.5 million litres of tequila a year and provide 25,000 jobs.

EU legislation recognises certain spirit drinks as being



Tequila: a taste of Mexico

inextricably linked to the place where they are made — Scotch whisky for example. If it is not made in Scotland, it cannot be called whisky but it cannot be called Scotch.

Now tequila will be pro-

TECTED in the same way, in what is the first bilateral trade agreement on intellectual property between the EU and Latin America. Euro PA succeeded in getting the new agreement approved by the Council of Ministers in May this year.

A drink can now be called tequila only if it has been produced in Tequila in Mexico. In return, Mexico will accept all the EU's definitions of spirits produced in Europe.

John Strak, director of Euro PA, says: "Mexico imports around \$75 million of spirits from the EU each year. The Mexican economy is growing vigorously, so Mexico could soon attain the level of spirit consumption seen in EU countries."

"Mexico is also influential in Latin America and could set a precedent for similar agreements on spirits among other countries."

Link to the future

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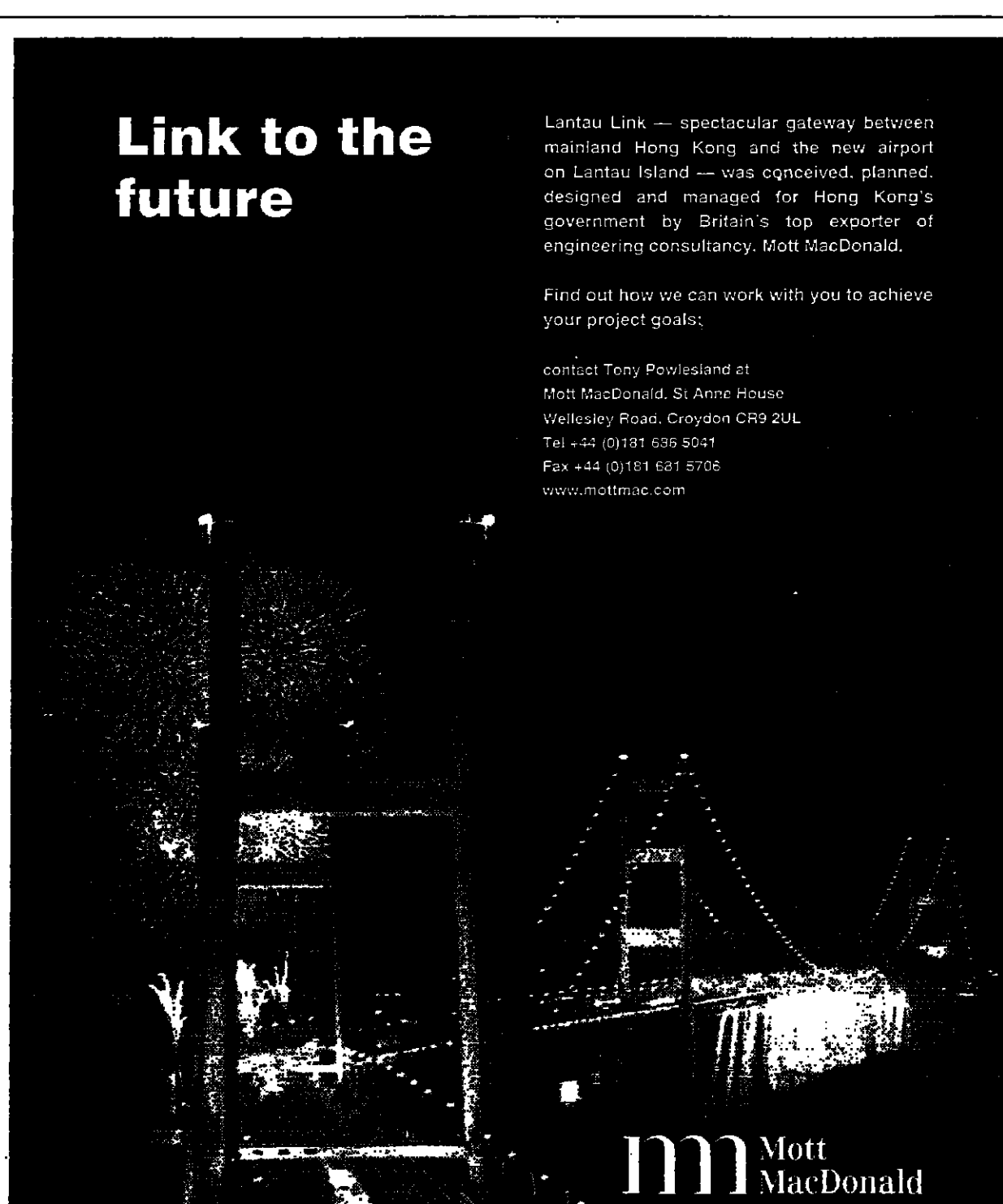
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the papua new guinea university of technology

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The Interim Council of the University of Vudal invites applications for the position of Vice Chancellor.

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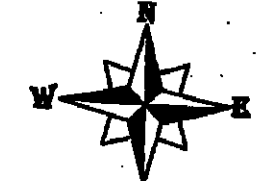
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Football

EDUCATION



The best young soccer players may no longer be able to play regularly for their schools after the vote taken this week by the Football Association

Football war kicks off

A project that threatens to become one of the most bitter issues in schools' sport was approved almost unanimously and with little publicity this week by the Football Association Council.

Pupils across England are now in the middle of a tug-of-war between the Football Association and professional clubs on one side and many teachers and officials on the other. The rivals are struggling for dominance in the development of youth football. The question is: are boys better served by playing in school and regional teams or in the academies that are to be set up at professional clubs?

Not only the future of the national game is at stake, but also the technical ability of generations of youngsters. "Watching with interest is the physical education profession, which sees the decision by the FA as a major step towards other sports."

Chris Laws, the president of the Physical Education Association (PEA), describes the dispute as "the most contentious issue in relations between PE and sport in recent years". The plans, which were passed this week by the 90-strong council with only two members opposed, were drawn up by Howard Wilkinson, the FA's technical director, and published as part of the *Charter for Quality*.

However, his plans have been criticised by the English Schools' Football Association (ESFA), which sees them as an erosion of its traditional role of being able to pick the best players for representative

English schools are crying foul at this week's attempt by the FA to cream off the best young players in the country, says John Goodbody

sides, both at regional and national level. The FA is adamant. The professional clubs will in future oversee the development of players from eight to 21, while the Premiership will organise its own youth league between the academies with a maximum of 30 matches a season. The clubs will provide expert coaching and competitive matches, although matches will be of a much higher standard. The FA will also be responsible for all England teams, including the national under-15 side.

Sue Campbell, the respected chief executive of the National Youth Trust, sees much wisdom in the FA's charter. She says: "Talented young people in many sports get overplayed and over-competed, although not necessarily over-trained. Everyone wants to grab a bit of the action of talented youngsters on the way up, so they play too much. Teachers and officials want their school and representative teams to win and so naturally they pick them."

She believes that, as a result, outstanding youngsters too rarely take part in

matches or competitions where the opposition is sufficiently testing for their standard. Dr Campbell would like to see them playing fewer matches or events, but in competitions of a higher standard.

Alan Heads, the ESFA chairman, accepts some of the features of the charter, such as encouraging youngsters to play football, but opposes the proposed policy of boys playing for academies and seldom for their schools, let alone their districts. "Educationally and socially that is a non-starter," he says.

Mr Heads, who teaches geography at Monkseaton High School, Whitley Bay, said that his ESFA colleagues are suspicious about the motives of the professional clubs. "It is thought that the academies are primarily interested in the evaluation of future stars, rather than the development of the individuals. Of all the thousands of boys who will play for the academies, how many will become professionals? Only a small percentage."

He points out that those youngsters who fail to make the grade in the academies will suffer from feelings of rejection when they return to regular schools' football.

Mr Laws sums up how polarised the argument has become. "To hear some people talk, you would think that the FA has gone back to child slavery and shoving youngsters up chimneys."

He approves the recommendation that professional clubs should have an education welfare officer to supply the sort of moral and psychological support for boys that schools provide now.

Mr Wilkinson emphasises that the plans for the academies will affect only the elite 1 per cent at the 13,000 schools which play football. The remainder will take part in schools' tournaments and because the elite will not usually be available, it will give competitive opportunities for less talented players, who have been deprived of these experiences in the past.

As a PE graduate, former teacher and manager of Leeds United when they won the Premiership, Mr Wilkinson has an unusually catholic background in football and is supported by leading authorities across the country. He accepts that any boy does have a loyalty to his school and will occasionally be able to represent the school after consultation between boy, parents, head teacher and football club. Mr Wilkinson says that the prime consideration must always be the welfare of the pupil. "The child has certain talents and, whatever his talents are, they should be developed, in conjunction with his whole development in other areas."

Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon on an invaluable report

The plus factor that schools should have

One of the last tasks of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority as it became part of a new quango was to consult schools on a national system for providing "value added" measures to every school.

You could be forgiven for thinking that someone does not want you to read the final report from the Value Added National Project. There was no full reference to it in the consultation document sent to schools and local authorities, and it costs £15 for 130 pages — admittedly in colour. A greater worry is what was left out of the consultation process and what was put in that was no part of the Value Added National Project.

First, let it be noted that the project was a success and Value Added is here to stay. The system, planned for England from 1998, will be an international first, running through the examination boards and similar bodies at practically no cost. This could be one of the most cost-effective and dramatic increases in the flow of educational information recorded: all schools could receive the value added data that thousands of schools have already opted to buy.

The SCAA's consultation document, *Value Added Indicators for Schools*, was admirable in clarity but contained parts from which we, the contractors on the project, wish to be dissociated. For example, the second sentence read: "Such data is a powerful analytical tool, helping schools to analyse their results and set targets for improvement." This linking of value added with target setting is a source of considerable sadness to those of us on the project. The work was about Value Added and not about target-setting.

Value Added scores are variable from year to year and teachers may simply end up playing a lottery in setting targets. It is true that some studies have shown that people falling trees fell more if higher targets are set, but to achieve that target they simply work faster. Should teachers talk faster perhaps? Education is not such a readily deliverable product as a felled tree. The only reliable strategy will be to try to get rid of pupils who are not making progress, which brings us to another problem.

With exclusion rates rising dramatically, any further incentives to exclude pupils could be disastrous. Society may reap the whirlwind later if difficult or troubled pupils are excluded in large numbers or shunted into "sink schools". One of the most important recommendations in the final report was that schools should be allowed to exclude some pupils from value added calculations, subject to audit by inspectors. The issue was alluded to in

SCAA's document, but not raised in the consultation questionnaire.

The willingness of some politicians, and some people at SCAA, to impose policies on schools is in strange contrast to their unwillingness to require proper quality assurance procedures from examination boards. At present, scripts can go to known markers, names of candidates and schools are on the scripts and no statistics are provided from the marking process on the extent to which marks were reliable, nor on the impact of syllabus choice on schools' value added scores.

The Value Added National Project final report not only summarises the seven technical reports but also has



chapters on: head teachers' views on value added; ways of presenting and using value added data; how a system could be run nationally; the downside of value added systems (forewarned is forearmed); and recommendations, along with several appendices and an illustrated glossary.

It could be a useful source of information for schools and governors and a resource book for anyone who might teach "Value Added", particularly as part of the new national qualifications for head teachers.

● The Value Added National Project Final Report (SCAA reference: COM/97/844) is available from SCAA Publications (0181-867 3299) along with three Technical Reports for secondary schools and four Technical Reports for primary schools.

● Professor Carol Taylor Fitz-Gibbon is author of the final report arising from the two-year Value Added National Project, commissioned by SCAA and undertaken by the Curriculum, Evaluation and Management (CEM) Centre, University of Durham.

A time to celebrate world-class projects

David Charter reports on the next round of the Queen's Anniversary Prizes



Buckingham Palace: a date for winners

COLLEGES and universities whose work is judged to have served the nation can earn themselves a date at Buckingham Palace in the biennial Queen's Anniversary Prizes.

A total of 23 British institutions won the accolade of a gold medal presented by the Queen in the last round of awards in 1996 for "world class" projects.

Now in the third of five rounds, the awards have become a national fixture. The judges said: "Winning entries demonstrate the strength and vigour of higher and further education in Britain."

"They betoken qualities of enterprise, imagination and brilliance. And they illustrate the breadth of our universities' and colleges' contribution to the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of the nation."

Winners last year, the second round of the competition, were recognised for initiatives ranging from unearthing the Roman past to providing training courses for Tibetans.

The University of Birmingham won praise for its "outstanding" Wroxeter Project, the exploration of the Ancient Roman city of Wroxeter, beneath the Shropshire fields. "Almost as large as Pompeii, Wroxeter is being patiently explored and one day it will

be as visible as Hadrian's Wall," the judges said. "Wroxeter is being studied by multidisciplinary teams that bridge the old moat between the arts and the sciences. The very large site has become an open-air laboratory where many new technological advances can be tested. The contribution of hundreds of amateur archaeologists, including schoolchildren, has been welcomed and systematically used."

Sheffield College was honoured for its "pioneering" Braille skills qualification for both sighted and blind students. "It has developed a unique course that makes

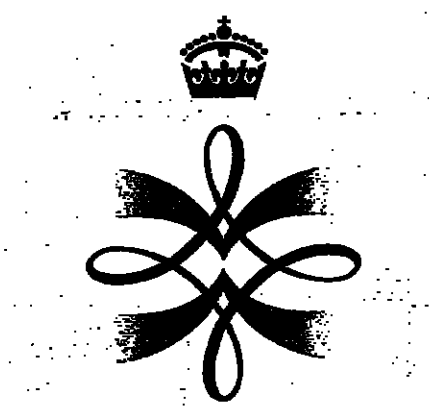
Braille teaching an academic discipline in its own right and which makes it possible to export the college's Braille expertise to other institutions," the judges said.

Another winner was Liverpool Hope College for its Ladakh Project. For the past ten years, college tutors have provided workshops on educational practice, mathematics and science in three villages of Tibetan refugees in India, which have helped 900 people.

The judges said: "Demonstrably high standards of teacher education have been achieved. The individuals working in the project, Tibetan and British, have learnt what can be achieved by groups of like-minded people with a shared goal. It is an experience that enriches the educational systems in which each of them works."

The University of Hull won recognition for its "unique and world-class" combination of academic study with professional practice in social work. It has the only social work agency in the world formed by and attached directly to a higher education institution.

"It has generated world interest," the judges said. "Powerful research into areas of recurring social problems affecting society is undertaken in conjunction with government agencies."



THE QUEEN'S ANNIVERSARY PRIZES 1998

Entries invited

UNIVERSITIES and colleges in the United Kingdom are invited to enter the 1998 (biennial) Round of the Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education.

The Queen's Prizes acknowledge world-class quality and the national and international value of work in UK universities and colleges. The subject of an entry may be any existing area of work or project from an institution's range of activities.

The closing date for entries is April 30, 1998. The prizewinners will be announced at St James's Palace in autumn 1998 and celebrated at Guildhall in the City of London in 1999.

The Prizes will be presented by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at Buckingham Palace in early 1999.

● For details, please write to: The Director of The Queen's Prizes Office, Riverwalk House, 157-161 Millbank, London, SW1P 4RR. Phone 0171-217 3281; fax 0171-217 3482



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media times

Meet Auntie's continuity man

As the BBC celebrates its 75th anniversary, its Chairman aims to retain the original notion of public interest while preparing for the digital age. By Raymond Snoddy

Today the BBC celebrates the 75th anniversary of the launch of its first daily radio broadcasts from a studio in London's Savoy Hill.

Sir Christopher Bland, the corporation's present Chairman, believes it was not inevitable that the BBC should have survived for so long, and prospered. Sir Christopher, an Ulsterman, notes with sardonic humour that when the BBC tried to launch radio in Northern Ireland, the local tradesmen would not accept cheques from the BBC on the ground that it was not expected to be around for long.

As he sits on a teak garden sofa in his Broadcasting House office, amid decor that would have surprised his stern predecessor John (later Lord) Reith, Sir Christopher notes some important parallels between what the BBC did then and what it is doing now to try to catapult itself into the world of digital television.

"You couldn't have forecast that huge enthusiasm for radio. It was Lord Reith's vision in programming and Marconi's in technical terms. There was no obvious demand for it," he says.

He hardly needs to explain it is a key justification for the array of new ventures announced by the BBC last week that just happened to coincide with the anniversary celebrations. The flurry of activity ranges from the launch of three subscription channels under the UK TV banner for cable and satellite in a joint venture with Flextech to an expansion of what the BBC calls "the third broadcasting service", its Internet news service and Sunday News 24, the round-the-clock television news service. News 24, now carried on cable, will be part of the BBC's offering on digital terrestrial television, which launches next autumn.

Sir Christopher — who in the first 18 months of his five-year term as Chairman has presided over perhaps the most dramatic period of change in the BBC's history — accepts that the new offerings are out of kilter with present audience requirements. "It is aimed at the way we believe the broadcasting market is developing," he says.

"It would be foolish to say we have no doubts. If, in 10 years' time, there is a tiny audience for 24-hour television news, if the penetration of PCs in the UK market and the use of the Internet is tiny, we will have made a bad bet," adds Sir Christopher, who added many millions to his wealth as the Chairman of London Weekend Television before being ousted by Granada in a hostile takeover. He feels that, whatever happens, "we won't have bet the farm".

Not the farm, perhaps, but certainly the odd pasture. Investment in all things digital at the BBC — including installing the latest

digital editing systems, which in turn should generate savings — could reach 9 to 10 per cent of the £1.9 billion licence fee each year for five years — or a gross figure approaching £1 billion.

"If you don't spend money on new services, you spend it on existing services, and that is where the pinch comes" — which will seem a truism to programme editors who have been asked to cut their budgets by 30 per cent over five years to help to pay for the new developments.

"You can't help feeling a sense of continuity," says Sir Christopher. Across the 75 years, and almost unimaginable change in communications, what has survived, he says, is "the notion of a public interest", the idea that broadcasting should be about more than just money and entertainment.

The BBC, Sir Christopher believes, is doing better than it had any right to forecast 10 or even five years ago. Its share of total viewing has been rising against ITV for the past four years and BBC radio heads held

on to a rough half-share of listening despite a proliferation of commercial stations. In Sir Christopher's view, some of the programming over the past six months has been as strong as anything the BBC has ever done.

Ask what he has in mind and Sir Christopher immediately says *Provos*, the documentary series on the Provisional IRA. "I was proud of *Provos*. It explained things in a way that even I, who should know more about Northern Ireland than the average viewer, didn't know or understand. The explanation and analysis led you to understand why the *Provos* have endured for so long," says the former second lieutenant in the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards.

His other choices are the new series of *Men Behaving Badly*, *I'm Alan Partridge* and *The Rugby Jannings in Jamaica* is among his radio favourites.

Sir Christopher owes his present position to a slightly eccentric and temporary career as a local politician. He stood for the Conservatives in Lewisham, South London, in 1967 to make up the numbers, and was probably the only candidate in local government history to demand a recount when he won. He never stood again, but in the meantime Christopher Chataway appointed him Chairman of the Inner London Education Committee, which led to an appointment as deputy Chairman of the Independent Television Authority, the predecessor of the Independent Television Commission, and on to commercial television and, finally, the chairmanship of the BBC.

In that role, he has certainly made a break with the past. The



Sir Christopher Bland, BBC Chairman: "You couldn't have forecast the huge enthusiasm for radio. There was no obvious demand for it"

current joke doing the rounds at the BBC asks what the difference is between Sir Christopher and his predecessor, Marmaduke Hussey. Answer? Marmaduke Hussey never spoke to his Director-General, John Birt. Sir Christopher speaks to no one else. There is some truth in the first part of the joke. By the end of his chairmanship Mr (now Lord) Hussey was barely speaking to Mr Birt, mainly because he had been given no early

warning about the *Panorama* interview with Diana, Princess of Wales. Sir Christopher smiles at the joke but says it isn't true. What is true is that he and Mr Birt have a strong relationship from their days together at LWT, where Mr Birt was director of programmes.

Sir Christopher says that whenever he goes to BBC Bristol or Birmingham he makes a point of having breakfast with 15 or 20 people under 35. "I wouldn't meet

them otherwise, and a remarkable and stimulating lot they are. It makes you think the BBC has still got what it takes."

He insists that the governors — a supervisory board of non-executives in the continental European sense — have been fully briefed and consulted on the BBC's controversial moves, and that the issue of paying for new ventures such as the Internet news service and News 24 out of the licence fee when most

licence fee payers could not see the result was discussed at length.

Controversy still rages, however, over some things Sir Christopher and his governors have approved. Many staff complain privately that the decision to split the commissioning of programmes from their production is creating two competing bureaucracies.

"It is the right structure for the BBC and it is settling down pretty well," says Sir Christopher, who

believes the reorganisation is essential in order to maintain savings — which have been running at £100 million a year. He also defends the continuing use of management consultants, something that irritates many BBC staff.

"Speaking as a former consultant, I have always been very reluctant to use them. I start from the point 'If in doubt, do it yourself,'" he says, adding that he is happy with the corporation's use of consultants — although he will not reveal how much a year is being spent on them; the figure is believed to be around £9 million.

The most recent pressure point at the BBC came in September, over a reorganisation of news and current affairs programmes such as *Today* that seemed to threaten the autonomy of programme editors and, with it, the programmes' distinctiveness.

When he found out in detail what was happening, Sir Christopher intervened. "Where we failed was in identifying the extent to which it would become a matter of passionate concern to those people working within the function."

But as he celebrates the BBC's 75th anniversary, Sir Christopher believes it is time to go on the offensive in defence of the BBC and the licence fee, which he believes enables the production of unique programmes. At £91.50 a year, he feels it is a real bargain compared with more than £300 a year for cable and satellite.

The contrast between what the BBC makes and what its commercial competitors make will increase, not decrease. So in 25 years' time I think we will have a BBC funded by licence fees that people do not begrudge. We are nearing that point already — people are critical, but not grudging. Another aim is to persuade the present Government, when it next reviews the licence fee system in about three years' time, that not only should the licence fee continue, but that the BBC should be "properly funded", a phrase that implies a licence fee not linked to the retail price index — though Sir Christopher will not quite commit himself to such a goal yet, at least in public.

As he contemplates the intensely political business of being the BBC's Chairman, Sir Christopher is convinced that there will always be rows and controversy over the corporation. Indeed, he told the Ireland Fund, a charitable body, earlier this week that he saw similar problems in governing Ireland and running the corporation. As he looks to the digital future and the 100th anniversary of the BBC, he wrote a poem about a mythical BBC past — based on the poet Walter Savage Landor's view of a halcyon period in Irish history.

Auntie never was contented? Say you so? You are demented Auntie was contented when MacNeice and Dylan used the pen

And Shaw advised on how to say The trickier words like Paraguy When men in black ties read the news

To listeners with Reithian views And every home could only see The one, the wondrous BBC.

It is all a far cry from a BBC having to compete in a 200-channel digital television broadcasting environment from next year.

Is Young about to become old news at Channel 5?

■ KIRSTY YOUNG, the 28-year-old anchorwoman at Channel 5, has become the new standard for news presenters. But she now has a challenger: BBC News 24's Sarah Montague — also blonde, youngish (32) and serious — has been given the regular breakfast slot. How long before she's reading *The Nine O'Clock News*?

■ WHICH media conference will Tony Blair open? There are competing bids from two big bashes for his presence, but 10 Downing Street is maintaining strict silence on the matter. The Second World Summit on Television for Children has asked the Prime Minister to be the key speaker at its meeting for 1,000 delegates in London in March. But so has the unappetisingly named European Audio & Visual conference, being held in Birmingham in April, as the centrepiece of Britain's term in the EU presidency. Given Mr Blair's image as a caring family man, children's TV may have the edge. But Jacques Santer, the President of the European Commission, is giving the keynote speech at Birmingham. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is praying that diplomacy may yet prevail.

■ MYSTIC MEG is off for a break as Peter Salmon, new Controller of BBC1, orders a complete rethink of National Lottery coverage. He's asked the TV producers behind real people shows — *Changing Rooms*, *The Driving School* — for a big idea to boost the ratings. Lottery millionaires decorating their new man-

sions, perhaps? The BBC's light entertainment department in charge of the lottery programme has hit the roof. But it has its own challenge — devising a new scratchcard television game show for the new year. This is risky territory. ITV was bowled out of bidding for the contract three years ago because Lady Luck, not the broadcaster, will dictate who plays before millions on the night. The new instant will give punters three options. Scratch in the shop; scratch at home during the programme or scratch and win an invitation to the show, as a contestant in a new lottery game for cash prizes. The drawback: you have to play with the hostess, Anthea Turner.



Battle of the blondes: Young and Montague



■ A YEAR AGO clubhouses across the Home Counties began buzzing with the news of an amazing subscription offer from *The Daily Telegraph* — 12 months for just £52. A pound a week, instead of £3.80. It was so generous that tens of thousands of loyal full-price purchasers converted, creating one of the newspaper industry's most memorable marketing own goals. As it expires, what is to

be the follow-up? After much passing from pillar to post, Jeremy Deedes, the managing director of *The Daily Telegraph*, finally took my call. Subscribers are being offered renewals at £2.50 a week, he said, a 150 per cent increase, but a concession nevertheless. I made the inquiry because *The Sunday Telegraph* has just posted me a regular reader, a three-month supply of 40p vouchers, so I can take the paper for half price. Very kind.

■ SAM CHISHOLM, who stepped down as chief executive of BSkyB this week, says he intends to stick with his highly rated deputy, David Chance. "We're a double act," he said. In the short term, both men are working, with Michael Grade, on the Millennium Project, the best guarantee of success the Greenwich Dome — Peter Mandelson's initiative — could have. In the longer term they plan to go into business together. What did Sam think of the description of him as a "bully" in Mathew

Horsman's forthcoming book, *Sky High*, being serialised in *The Guardian*? "I'm flattered," he said.

■ BRENDA REID, the top producer behind *Ballykissangel* and a key figure in Tony Garnett's (*This Life*) World Productions, has returned bubbling with outrage from the European Prix Niki festival in Greece, set up to promote the image of women in television. As judge of the fiction jury she is aghast at the stereotypical trope dominating Europe's screens. "Nine out of 11 drama series featured single mothers, perfectly groomed and slim in Donna Karan, living in immaculate homes, with one perfect child, cared for by a wonderful nanny. They all work in the law, either as top policemen or lawyers. They don't need husbands, and they have absolutely nothing to do with real life. *Prime Suspect* has a lot to answer for."

■ AFTER Channel 4's disdainfully reviewed *A Dance to the Music of Time* (final episode: 2.5 million viewers) there has been an anguished internal debate about whether it would have won more converts with a second catch-up screening during the week. In marked contrast, the BBC's *Tom Jones* (7.5 million for the first episode last



The first episode of the BBC's *Tom Jones* drew 7.5 million viewers

Sunday) will be repeated on Wednesdays. Broadcasters know that audiences love a second chance: the problem is cost. With Ashley Hill, Channel 4's scheduler, departing to Channel 5, it is said that a more viewer-friendly public service policy is on the cards.

■ CHANNEL 4 is to devote its Christmas coverage to its own birth, 15 years ago this month. There will be a re-

vived version of Jonathan Ross's *The Last Resort* but no mention of *The Word*. Chris Morris to deliver the traditional Channel 4 Christmas message?

■ CLASSIC FM is changing its schedules next month, ahead of its main rival, Radio 4's revamp next year. It is moving its drive-time news back to 6.30pm and starting instead a new hour-long

music programme at 7pm, specifically designed to calm nerves and conquer "road rage". Perhaps Radio 4 producers might need to tune into it. They are said to be hopping mad after James Boyle, the Controller of Radio 4, confirmed who has won commissions for his new accessible schedule starting on April 1. Producers in the regions, especially Bristol, were said to be "inconsolable".

Columnists
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Columnists who tell us what to think

When Matthew Parris starts writing his Friday column for *The Times* on Thursday morning, he knows that it must be exactly 1,480 words long. It must also be opinionated, capture readers' attention in the first two paragraphs, sustain that interest to the last paragraph, and leave them satisfied they have been either instructed, informed, amused or entertained. Otherwise they may not return next Friday.

Parris gives himself five hours for his 1,480 words. "Otherwise I play around and do it to death," setting that personal deadline is necessary anyway. Once the column is finished, he hastens to the Commons to write his parliamentary sketch — another 580 words which have to be delivered by 5pm.

Simon Jenkins, who writes two columns a week for *The Times*, works differently. He will be in his office today by 8am, write until lunch and spend the afternoon polishing his copy. At 6pm he will deliver 1,450 words precisely.

Columnists such as Parris and Jenkins are the stars of British journalism. They are wooed and cosseted by editors with the same tender loving care that is lavished by Premiership managers on an Alan Shearer or Teddy Sheringham.

A tribute to the skill of this journalistic art form is paid this month in *The Penguin Book of Columnists*. The nightmare for all anthologists is the complaint from critics about the writers they have rejected. Its editor, Christopher Silvester, admits a bias to American columnists and omits several of the contemporary British columnists he most admires — who include Parris, Craig Brown, Stephen Glover and Robert Harris. Almost all the living British columnists Silvester has included are Ws — When, Watkins, Waterhouse, Waugh and Worsthorne, although Levin, Mount, Bywater and the Frayn of the 1960s also get a look-in.

He includes none of my favourites, who would include *The Times*'s Op-ed columnists as well as Hugo Young, Andrew Marr, Simon Hoggart, Polly Toynbee, Paul Foot and Melanie Phillips. That is because my taste is political and Anglo-centric. Silvester's emphasis is on the history of the column. It is an American genre, he argues, and only in America is it a vocation to be a columnist. The most successful, such as Art Buchwald and Russell Baker of *The New York Times*, became millionaires.

That is certainly not true of Britain, where

Paul Johnson, a columnist as prolific as Jenkins, has published a collection of his columns for *The Spectator* (*To Hell with Picasso*, Phoenix). Writing can be more drudgery than pleasure, journalism more degradation than duty, he says in his introduction. But to write a regular column is one of the great privileges of life.

"Universities are the most overrated institutions of our age." "I find it hard to think of anything, even the Arts Council, which has done more harm to English literature than the Booker Prize." Studying Johnson's technique — often the use of a strikingly provocative sentence early on — one sees why Johnson is so readable (even for those who disagree with almost everything he writes). We instantly want to read on.

At the *Daily Mail*, Richard Littlejohn, the 1996 Columnist of the Year, prefers satire, which he uses to devastating effect. Yesterday, as the C of E considers updating the

Lord's Prayer, he decided to bring Jerusalem up to date: "We will not cease from cant and spite Nor will our banner sleep in our hand Until our sacred nanny's home In Eng-er-land, Eng-er-land."

One joy for Littlejohn, he says, is that his column is cathartic. It stops him wandering the streets with an Uzi.

Jenkins prefers to test common assumptions against the facts. "It is more illuminating in trying to understand an argument if its antithesis is set out as well as its thesis — and it is better copy if you don't say the same thing as other columnists."

All columnists admit that they are never off duty. Once today's column is finished, the thought of a subject for the next press on their mind. For Parris there is an added danger. Once his early years of panic were over, he says, there was the deeper panic of becoming fluent but predictable. "It is the fear of adequacy that begins to grip you."

There is an assured future for journalists who can write opinionated and readable columns. Columnists have waxed on newspapers as the significance of news has waned. Few newspaper readers last Tuesday did not know that Louise Woodward had been freed. So we want to know what to think about the news and turn to the columnist most likely to say what we want to hear — to Libby Purves, Lynda Lee-Potter, Anne Robinson, Polly Toynbee, Julie Burchill or Joan Smith, all superb practitioners of the art.



Brian MacArthur

Marriage under the lens

Carol Midgley asks why couples let cameras into their counselling sessions

The majority of people who visit a Relate counsellor agree that the most difficult part is discussing the intimacies of their marriage with a total stranger. Imagine, then, the sort of couple who invite three million strangers to pull up a chair and endure the whole excruciating experience with them.

Meet Trevor and Tracey, Alan and Mary, Steve and Sandie, Tony and Justine, the stars of a BBC2 documentary, who have agreed not so much to wash their dirty linen in public but to throw in their socks, vests and novelty underpants, too.

Incredibly, these people, at a time of great crisis in their lives, allowed a fly-on-the-wall camera into their Relate counselling sessions to tell the world how monotonous their sex lives have become; how they are often beaten up by their (female) partner; how the sound of their husband eating an apple makes them feel almost homicidal.

In this age of fly-on-the-wall mania, we tend to lack sympathy for people who parade their private selves in front of the camera. The loathsome guests of Paul Watson's *The Dinner Party*, and Nolene, of *Sylvania Waters*, became objects of ridicule. But, smugly, we felt they deserved it for being vain enough to seek 15 minutes of fame.

Breaking Point, however, in which four couples and one single woman are filmed during their Relate sessions, is a different television experience altogether. Unlike many documentaries today, it does not try to create the drama, but lets



In *Breaking Point*, Trevor and Tracey admit that there has been "no sparkle" to their union since they married

the understated human tragedies unfold for themselves via a single camera trained on a sparsely furnished counselling room.

When we see gormless Trevor and his downtrodden wife admitting there is "no sparkle" in their 14-year marriage and hasn't been since before the wedding, we don't want to laugh at them, only at our own embarrassment.

Trevor's rage when he discovers that Tracey, in her paranoia, has read one of his private letters is cringe-making to watch but more gripping than any episode of *EastEnders*.

"Real life" television has become our modern-day theatre. When David Liddiment took over as director of programmes at ITV, it was not the BBC's costume drama or comedy he said he envied but *Driving School* and *Animal Hospital*. It took the BBC's documentary crew nearly two

years to persuade Relate and sufficient clients to co-operate with the film — the first time in its history that Relate has allowed cameras into its sessions. Letters from the BBC were sent out to every newly signed couple inviting them to take part. Of the hundreds sent, about 20 couples replied, five of whom went through with it to the bitter end.

The result was Mags, a newly divorced woman who was treated like an object by her husband; Tony and Justine, a handsome young couple with a baby who cannot agree to marry; Sandie and Steve, who are both traumatised by their past; Alan and Mary, who have three children and have fallen out of love; and Trevor and Tracey.

The 40-minute programmes are riveting pieces of television not because they are particu-

larly revelatory but because they mirror millions of typical relationships.

Peter Gordon, the series producer, says: "I never know quite what it is that makes people go through with this kind of documentary but there was quite a strong altruistic streak to it. Either one or both of the couples knew of people who had been helped by counselling. I have to say I didn't get any sense that there was an exhibitionist kind of streak."

Clare Paterson, the executive producer, said the idea was to show the process of Relate counselling and how it breaks down barriers. The charity has nearly 4,000 counsellors at 126 centres and a waiting list of desperate people.

We watch genuine moments of self-realisation as Trevor realises he falls asleep on the couch at night to escape confronting his unhappy mar-

riage and Mags realises she picks fights with her boyfriend to test their love for her.

"It is easy to make accusations about voyeurism and intrusive cameras but absolutely no one was pressurised into taking part," Ms Paterson said. "There is nothing in this series that the clients don't know about. I think they would find it difficult to say why they did it, maybe some thought it would be a lucky talisman."

"Relate wanted us to show how they operate, for us to be there when the solutions emerged, and I think it has worked. I was struck by how moved I was by the problems."

All the clients have approved the films, as has Relate. And there is at least one happy ending. Tony and Justine plan to marry next year.

● *Breaking Point*, Wednesday, BBC2, 9.50pm.

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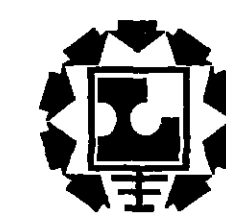
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LA inconsequential

Giles Whittell
on the identity
crisis at the
LA Times

When O.J. Simpson was acquitted of murder, the *Los Angeles Times* covered the story with 28 articles by 39 reporters, spread over 17 broadsheet pages. The next time American justice went on trial, with the first verdict in the Louise Woodward case, the same newspaper had no one in the courtroom. It recorded the event with one short wire story from Associated Press.

The *LA Times* is the news behemoth of the West Coast, famous for its huge staff, high moral tone and a habit of ignoring stories of consuming national interest such as the Woodward trial. But it is now under fire for other reasons.

With healthy profit margins and a circulation of more than one million, it is America's fourth-largest daily. (*The Wall Street Journal* has 1.7 million daily readers, *USA Today* 1.6 million and *The New York Times* 1.07 million.) Even so, in barely a month it has taken on a new publisher, a new editor and a controversial plan to boost profits still further and add half a million new readers by giving each of its sections a "business manager".

The management changes have gone down well on Wall Street, but more like a lead balloon elsewhere. Since they were announced in early October, the paper has been variously accused of spinelessness, mediocrity and threatening its newsroom's independence. It also faces questions about whether a single newspaper can cover properly the sprawling and diverse city.

The immediate trouble began early last month, when Mark Willes, formerly head of a breakfast-cereal maker, named himself publisher after two years as head of the paper's parent company, the Times Mirror Co, which also



The *LA Times* has tried to be all things to all people, and failed

owns *New York Newsday* and the *Baltimore Sun*. The move followed Willes's firing of 150 journalists last year, and several hints that he regarded the sections of his flagship newspaper as marketable brands, like *Cheerios* and *Wheaties*. His Editor, Shelby Coffey III, resigned after eight years on the job, and for a few days was hailed as an honourable journalist who had been driven out by meddling suits.

Then Jill Stewart, a respected former *LA Times* reporter, struck. "With his gutless detachment from the hard issues facing Los Angeles, the departing Editor of the *LA Times* turned a paper on the verge of greatness into a morass of mediocrity," she wrote in *The New York Times*, accusing her old employer of "groveling at the feet of Holly-

wood, ignoring the decline of Los Angeles and prostituting the paper's political content to the city's foolish Old Left".

Her claims, including one that Mr Coffey trimmed his showbiz coverage to please such cronies as actors Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman, are "just not borne out by the facts", according to Michael Parks, Mr Coffey's successor. But others on the newspaper's 1,100-strong editorial staff admit to a "culture of timidity" dating back to the landmark event of LA's recent history, the riots of 1992.

The *LA Times*'s self-appointed task is daunting. It clings to a role as the national and international voice of California, but its biggest challenge is being a local paper for a megalopolis the size of southern England that comprises 80 separate cities and a hundred nationalities. Appealing to ev-

eryone was never going to be easy, but when the riots erupted, the paper almost blew up, too. Black and Latino reporters, and the city at large, accused Mr Coffey of ignoring racial tensions in his backyard until they exploded.

These reporters also resented being assigned to most of the paper's frontline coverage of fires and looting in South-Central LA, where Mr Coffey reportedly worried that his white staffers would be at risk. Penitent soul-searching ensued in the executive suites.

"We really wanted to scrutinise the problems, but we were terrified of what we would find," says one senior reporter. "We were very much on tiptoe even before the riots, but they scared the hell out of the whole city."

Separate new sections were rolled out, catering to black and Hispanic Los Angeles.

Political correctness ruled. A style guide was even issued that banned the use of such phrases as "going Dutch" and "welding on a bet" for fear that the Dutch and the Welsh might be offended.

The result was a newspaper of unmatched earnestness, torn between reporting and doling out "feel-good" fodder such as soft "community profiles" and a daily list of jokes entitled "laugh lines".

"The paper tries to be all things to all people, but in the process it becomes very little to anyone," a former investigative reporter there declared. "It has no soul."

Others, such as the columnist Richard Reeves, painted an even bleaker picture. "The riots revealed that there really is no LA," he wrote, "just areas of unrest, and the *LA Times* is a symbol, and a victim and a cause of that." Certainly, its efforts to reach out to more ethnic minorities were quickly accused of further "balkanising" both the city and its news — no small irony considering that the paper's founder, Harry Chandler, spent the early years of this century in cabooks with real estate developers, shamelessly promoting the urban sprawl his successors find so hard to cover.

A tradition of reporting excellence still survives at the *LA Times*, fostered over two decades until the late 1980s by its then publisher, Otis Chandler. Last week a riveting and important 10,000-word piece on a Pennsylvania court case gone awry dominated the front page for two days. But this may not be the kind of story favoured by the suits.

Thanks to endless market research, yet more new sections — laden no doubt, with advertising — aimed at women and Latinos are in the works. With no competition "except the sun", as one wag put it, Messrs Willes and Parks may yet find their 500,000 new readers.

Whether they will produce a world-class newspaper in the process is another matter.

Here is the ITV news: expect radical change

When the plans to revive the fortunes of ITV are revealed in January, there is a better than even chance that the proposals will include the end of the line for *News at Ten* and plans for the birth of *News at Six* and *News at Five*.

There is no doubt that the new triumvirate who have taken over at the ITV Network Centre — Richard Eyre, former group managing director of Capital Radio, David Liddiment, ex-Granada, and perhaps most significant of all, John Hardie, the marketing director from Procter & Gamble — must come up with something at the end of their self-proclaimed first 100 days.

It is not just that ITV's viewing share has been dropping these five years — which it has — rather more seriously, its share of advertising revenue has been falling in tandem. Four years ago ITV had about 72 per cent of commercial advertising revenue. Now with Channel 5 in the field, it is about 65 per cent. The latest unofficial estimates for 1997 show that ITV will take £1.68 billion, a rise of only 1.4 per cent on the year. With Channel 5 pushing for £150 million next year — compared with this year's £33 million since its Easter launch — analysts believe that just staying still in real terms could be a considerable achievement.

Which will bring the gaze of the ITV bosses to *News at Ten*. The programme is very lucrative for ITV, and in the London area particularly attracts members of the great and good who tend not to be home early enough for other main news bulletins. But if *News at Ten* stays where it is, then it is very difficult to see how radical changes can be made to the ITV schedule. Given fixed points such as *Coronation Street*, the problem is that because of the watershed the present schedule means that two-hour dramas or feature films are inevitably bisected by the national and local news.

When the last bungled attempt, in the spring of 1993, was made to send the removal van round to *News at Ten*, everybody from John Major and John Smith to Buckingham Palace and the Archbishop of Canterbury got involved. Politicians were naturally against a move because they liked to see the knife-edge votes that add a little drama to their verbose trade.

At the time, the shift of the cats of ITV appeared to be attempting to drive a coach and horses through the quality provisions of the 1990 Broadcasting Act — the spirit if not precisely the letter. Sir George Russell, then chairman of the Independent Television Commission, was determined to keep *News at Ten* precisely where it was.

The row was intensified because ITV appeared to be looking at a very early slot and Mr Major was among those who was concerned that there would be no real competition to the BBC in mid-evening.



Raymond Snoddy

It is remarkable how much has changed in British television in the past six years and just how much competition has intensified.

The ITC has made it clear it is prepared to consider any formal proposals from ITV in an open-minded way. The increasing pressure on ITV ratings and revenues would clearly be a factor in their minds.

The ITC has already been flexible enough to allow Channel 5 to vacate its 8.30pm slot for 7pm and a head-to-head with *Channel 4 News*, although the two are aimed at very different audiences.

It is almost as if the stage has been cleared for the ITV companies to propose a very plausible new home for the main evening news bulletin at 8.30pm. There would be intense competition with the BBC and the ITV companies would be able to do some hard selling around an uninterrupted drama or film slot starting at 9.00pm. The BBC, if it wanted to, could even migrate the *Nine O'Clock News* to 10pm and perform the public service duty of showing our legislators in the division lobbies.

It has to be said, however, that in the age of 24-hour television news the arguments about when the main "flagship" news bulletins are scheduled become increasingly academic. Of far greater worry to news broadcasters everywhere is the fear of losing touch with the young.

At the annual News World conference of news broadcasters in Berlin last weekend, the most pressing obsessions were about Diana, Princess of Wales, and Louise Woodward. But the undercurrents were about losing the young. One media consultant said that network TV evening bulletins were on the way to becoming dinosaurs, watched by the retired and elderly.

Already Channel 4 has called for ideas on a fresh approach to *Channel 4 News*. If ITV moves *News at Ten* it would also give an opportunity to see whether television news can be made more relevant to the young without trivialising its public purpose.

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all that makes me feel queasy

boys removed



All that spin makes many feel queasy

The rise and rise of public relations is causing disquiet — especially among journalists, says Carol Midgley

Most newspaper journalists are familiar with that sinking feeling. At precisely the busiest, most inconvenient point of the day comes the breathless phone call. "Hi there, it's Arabella from the Really Irritating PR Group. Look, we're sending you a press release about this amazing new ad for tin foil. It's very upbeat and sexy, really innovative use of the camera; quite a departure from their last ad. Is that a story for you?"

While this may seem an unfair generalisation of our often excellent public relations industry, it does not, alas, exaggerate the banality of a great many of the PR calls made to journalists every day. Any specialist will tell you that it is not unusual to spend the first hour of the day transferring piles of meaningless press releases from envelopes and into bins. Some are packaged so cleverly that it takes considerably longer than the regulation 15 seconds to establish their worthlessness, compounding the irritation.

The procedure is normally thus: phone call to say that press release is on its way; follow-up call to ask if whether it has arrived; third call to ask whether press release has been read, and fourth, fifth, sixth, etc calls demanding to know if and when the press release is going to be used.

In isolated cases, PRs hurl abuse at journalists for not being expert enough to spot the "story". (I have seen a grown man hurl a telephone against a filing cabinet while being hounded over a release about diet biscuits for dogs.)

But as the PR industry gathered for the IPR National Conference in Manchester earlier this month, it had plenty to be pleased about. Recent figures show that between 1995 and 1996, the income of the largest 150 PR companies increased by a fifth, to £330 million, while the number of staff employed by those firms rose by 11.5 per cent, to more than 5,740.

Growing numbers of graduates are opting to follow careers in PR. Tony Blair, meanwhile, has shown how much value he places on media relations by building a large and powerful media-

relations unit to be run from 10 Downing Street. Everywhere we turn, it seems, there are PR officers. Despite the high number of time-wasters, journalists know that for every three bad PRs, there is normally one frighteningly good one. Some journalists are now beginning to express unease about the growing power of PRs and spin-doctors, especially in Westminster, where anecdotes about the arch-sultans of spin — Peter Mandelson, Charlie Whelan and Alastair Campbell — are legion.

Recently, in a full-page article, the *Press Gazette* was moved to ask whether PR was now "spinning out of control". Ian Hargreaves, Editor of *New Statesman*, remarked: "There

The press was happy to be spun daily by Labour in Opposition"

is a danger that journalists will be outgunned and out-classed by the PR machines of both private and public sectors. A healthy democracy demands that this does not occur."

Unsurprisingly, PR experts have little sympathy for this view. Jon Aaron, managing director of the corporate division at the Communication Group, found the future over Charlie Whelan and the single currency amusing. "There is a delicious irony in seeing the press complain about spin-doctoring when they were quite happy to be spun on a daily basis by Labour in Opposition," he says.

Simon Lewis, president of the Institute of Public Relations, which has 6,000 members, says he does not believe the publicity surrounding Westminster spin-doctors has damaged PR's reputation.

"I take the opposite view. The fact that the Government takes communication so seriously is very good news for us. The phrase spin-doctors is used as a term of criticism by

people who don't understand what it is about.

"Spin-doctor is often used as a synonym for being economical with the truth, which is worrying, but we have to make clear that effective PR is about accountability."

"A PR person who acts dishonestly with a journalist doesn't last very long anyway. PR people are paid advocates, promoting something they believe in."

Kelly Walsh, client services partner for Renegade, a new British advertising and PR group, and former European PR director for Gap, understands the frustrations of journalists. "PRs often don't research things properly. They ring up before finding out what a media correspondent or education editor does."

"When people are ill-informed and unprofessional it damages our reputation. It must be very frustrating for journalists, especially since editorial teams are much smaller in Britain than in the United States. But they are intelligent people and pretty quick to dispel stories."

An "insidious" new trend identified recently has been for companies to send their PRs to press conferences where they believe they will be criticised. The press officers then identify the journalists present and try to pressure them to interview representatives of their company.

Jonathan Rush, of the Communication Group, which counts Dixons and McDonald's among its clients, says: "The media itself uses public relations, so it can hardly complain. The BBC, for example, when it has an interesting programme coming out, will put out teaser press releases to local radio stations in advance."

"Journalists are the biggest spinners of the lot — every newspaper puts its own spin on things. There are a lot of PR people out there and they are under a lot of pressure to get results. But if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys. Experienced PR people focus on building relations with journalists. I won't call journalists if I think I am wasting their time."

"You have to be able to put yourself in their shoes, have a good business sense and a good feel for your client's



Role models: the power of Labour spin-doctors Peter Mandelson (left) and Dave Hill (right) has inspired more companies to upgrade their own PR machines

objectives. There is no doubt that PR is showing a healthy growth. We were savaged during the recession but now we are coming back."

Keith Cooper, communications director at the Royal Opera House, however, believes the job of the PR is "more difficult now." "The balance of power has shifted back to the newspapers," he says.

"I feel more manipulated by the newspapers because of the story they want to write. People want the ROH to feed into their idea that it is a self-preserving oligarchy, answerable to nobody. It is difficult to come through that. News editors don't really want to know if you say 'but let me show you this aspect'."

Eileen Wise, a former journalist who was Norma Major's press officer during the general election campaign and is now director of communications at the National Magazine Company, sympathises with both sides. "PR people,

for various reasons, have a bad reputation and some of it is deserved," she says. "Many don't check their market — they will pitch the same story to the *Cambridge Evening News* that they pitch to *The Sun* or *The Times* without putting a different slant or style on it. But any journalist who takes things off a plate from a PR is lazy. It is their job to check out information, they shouldn't just take it as gospel."

"Some PR people I know are among the most professional people around. Sir Tim Bell, who I was lucky to work with during the election campaign, is brilliant. He has a real instinct for the job, and that filters down to his staff."

"The reality is that we are living in a media age and I do think that companies need high-quality advice about media relations. There is an adage that people believe what they read in a newspaper or magazine much more than they would an advert, so a good PR department is as important today as an advertising company."

Damian Whitworth assesses Barclaycard's new ad

THE six-and-a-half year relationship between Rowan Atkinson and Barclaycard is over. Both sides insist that the split was amicable. The credit card company said the series of 17 television commercials in which Atkinson played a hapless spy were very successful. "But all good things must come to an end," says Atkinson.

But now, a few days later and as bold as you please, Barclaycard is proudly showing off the new campaign it has lined up to replace its old flame. Paul Parmenter, marketing director of Barclaycard, confesses all: "There was a feeling that the Rowan campaign had run its course," he says.

The new campaign is very different, though again the emphasis is on humour. In the first 40-second advert, another goofy, but this time unrecognisable, chap is seen getting up and preparing to go to work.

During his routine everything that could go wrong in his house does — until the whole edifice comes crashing down and the viewer is told: "Don't put it off, put it on (pause) Barclaycard."

The most noticeable difference with not just the most recent Barclaycard campaign, but all those in

Rowan hands in his card



New ad's unknown hero

recent memory, is the absence of a star. First there was Dudley Moore, then Alan Whicker and then Atkinson. Parmenter says that the idea was to do something different from much of the current crop of advertisements. "We didn't rule out using a celebrity, but celebrities are much more common in advertising today."

The company is also trying to put a different emphasis on what its product has to offer. While the globe-trotting Whicker was introducing consumers to the idea

that the credit card could be used around the world, the Atkinson adverts attempted to highlight the services on offer when things go horribly wrong.

"Cards are used in a much more everyday type of way now," says Parmenter. So an everyday chap is being used to sell a card that will buy users a plumber when a tap pops off, or a builder to mend a roof that slithers into a heap.

THE other big difference is that Barclaycard is putting great store by its tag-line. It believes its exhortation not to delay jobs around the house is likely to become a famous catchphrase.

After hearing it a few dozen times, it may become a common advertising reference point, but initially it feels a little contrived and the advertisement as a whole is less clever than its predecessors. Is it telling us to whack repair bills on to our cards when we can't afford them?

The decision to split with Atkinson a year before his contract ran out "was not taken lightly," says Parmenter. Only customers' reactions to the new campaign will tell if it hits Barclaycard hard.

Les boys removed from the black stuff

GUINNESS currently claims a 5.2 per cent share of the total UK beer market, its highest ever. The brewer also believes that its current "black-and-white" advertising campaign (the one with the fish on the bicycle and the old man marrying the young blonde) has given the brand its highest ever level of advertising awareness. Splendid stuff. One might imagine Guinness's agency, Ogilvy & Mather, has been awarded bonuses to the hilt, or at the very least inundated with extra crates of the black stuff as reward.

But as ever with the ad industry, you'd be wrong. This week Guinness announced a review of its prized £12 million billing advertising account, inviting three agencies to pit themselves against O&M because "part of the Guinness ethos has always been to move on before we have to," and O&M's work "cannot be delivered any further". Which, of course, is nowhere near the full story.

That begins in 1995, when a leak to the marketing press revealed that the maverick commercials director Tony Kaye had filmed an ad featuring two gay men at home in the morning, with one pecking the other on the cheek as he left for work.

It was a gift for the tabloids. There was outrage from traditionalist publicans and shareholders all over the media, and Guinness was soon backtracking.

Its then marketing director, Rob MacNevin, issued a carefully worded statement that insisted: "At no time did we set out to make a so-called 'gay' ad, nor will we be screening one." He was right on the second count, but those of us who had the ad turn up on our

desks in a brown envelope knew that the soundtrack to the male peck was the gay anthem *Stand By Your Man*, by Tammy Wynette.

Of course the men were supposed to be gay, and of course that didn't mean Guinness was targeting the gay community. But the brewer's nerve, stunned by the vehemence of the response. Unsurprisingly, the campaign did not recover. However much people noticed and liked the other ads, the suspicion that all was not well persisted. The threat of review hung heavy.

It all goes to prove yet again that the relationship between client and agency is at least as important as the end product. Clearly, looking at the campaign's results and news of the review, it's true "not everything in black and white



makes sense". It's all a great shame because the gay kiss sent out the kind of positive message the ad industry has consistently shied away from. And it was a damn good commercial.

SCEPTICAL media hacks spent the early part of the year being smoothed by what became known as the Channel 5 dream team: the chief executive, David Elstein, the sales director, Nick Milligan, the marketing director, David Brook, and the programme director, Dawn Airey. Tired of hearing how wonderfully "stripped and stranded", "mainstream and modern"

the new channel would be, thoughts turned to who would be the first to go in the event of a flop.

Not Mr Elstein, because he joined too close to the Easter launch; Mr Milligan would claim he could sell only the programmes he had; the same went for Mr Brook in marketing. No, Dawn Airey was the unanimous favourite.

As it happens, the channel has neither flopped nor been a huge success (name one programme) and it is the talented Mr Brook who is off first. He has joined Channel 4 as director of strategy and development, where he will doubtless tell all of us how wonderful Channel 4 is with the same fervour he bought those pesky multicoloured stripes. The only question is whether, now that he is out of

the Channel 5 bunker, he will view its pathetic launch without the rose-tinted spectacles.

MEDIA owners and regulators lack a consistent policy towards advertising to charities and pressure groups. This week Pearl & Dean, one of Britain's two big cinema sales houses, declined to accept an anti-fox-hunting cinema commercial from the International Fund for Animal Welfare on the ground that Warner Cinemas thought the ad "too political". Press ads in the same campaign had already run in newspapers such as *The Times*.

Of course the fox-hunting ad is political. It features the fox-eye view of a terrifying chase, with hunters and hounds baying for its blood.

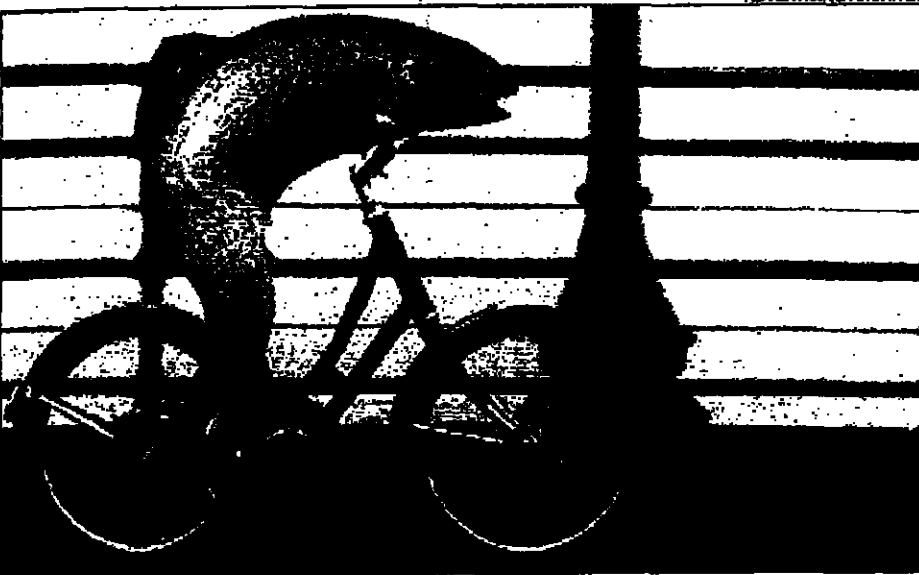
The ad ends with the line "For pity's sake, ban fox-hunting" and an invitation to call your MP ahead of the parliamentary debate on November 28. But why is it banned, when cinema owners allow ads for such obviously political organisations as Shelter to run with impunity?

The answer is that while no cinemagoer would disagree with the notion that homelessness is iniquitous, the estimated 22 per cent of the population in favour of fox-hunting are vociferous and have high spending power.

The ad seeks to turn most consumers' passive dislike of fox-hunting into active writing to their MPs.

It is bizarre that cinemagoers are denied the same rights to make up their own minds that newspaper readers have, not on the ground of taste, but politics.

Stefano Hatfield is Editor of Campaign.



Drink like a fish: Guinness's "black and white" campaign was a big success

Save Old Vic from the stripper assets

At noon today a sharp-suited West End estate agent will rip open some sealed envelopes, pick up the phone to a venerable shopping magnate and his son in Toronto, and tell them what they are bid for one of the greatest of London theatres. "Hon-est Ed" Mirvish and his son David — who outbid Andrew Lloyd Webber to acquire the Old Vic for £550,000 in 1982, and spent millions (some say £30 million) refurbishing it and bankrolling its numerous loss-making ventures — will then decide its fate.

The Mirvishes' selling price is said to be a hefty £7.5 million. But they have also declared that they will sell the Vic only to someone prepared to maintain it as a repertory theatre. You don't have to be Mr Price Waterhouse to see that these two aspirations may not add up.

Consider what has happened at the Vic this year. Sir Peter Hall has mounted an astonishing rep season: 12 plays, great casts, a radical seven-days-a-week schedule, bold new work, attractive ticket prices.

It has galvanised London's theatre scene. The reviews have been positive and attendances good by current standards. But the Mirvishes had asked for a 65 per cent average take on a house of 1,067 seats, and that has not been achieved. The deficit on the season is approaching seven figures. Who will now fork out £7.5 million, and then have the spare change to risk that kind of loss?

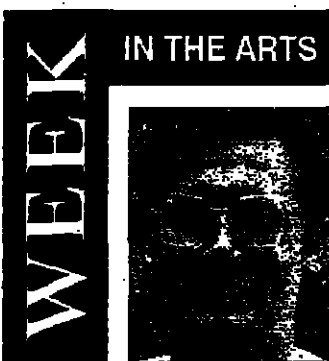
Quite a few people, it seems. "The interest has been massive," the estate agent tells me. Mind you, the last estate agent to assure me that "the interest has been massive" subsequently took 18 months to sell my house.

Rather ominously, however, the agent says that inquiries have come from "a diverse range of people". That presumably includes the nightclub owner Alan Whitehead, who has announced a wish to turn the theatre that nurtured

Gielgud, Olivier and Richardson into a lap-dancing establishment. I suppose lap-dancing could be described as a form of "repertory theatre". And perhaps we should not get too sanctimonious about the Vic. After all, for much of the 19th century it was known as a lowbrow dive in which the spectacle of drunken depravity in the auditorium was at least as gripping as the violent melodramas on the stage. Lap-dancing rather pales into insipidity beside that.

But are there no serious bidders? Sir Cameron Mackintosh ruled himself out early on. Lloyd Webber might be tempted to try for the Vic again, but his Really Useful Group — in financial distress recently — may not yet be back in acquisitive mode.

Other big West End owners — Stoll Moss, Apollo Leisure, Mayfair — could be in the running. But for them the Vic is hardly a good



RICHARD MORRISON

investment. It is south of the Thames, in a dingy area. The irrepressible Bill Kenwright, Sir Peter Hall's longtime business associate, may be a dark-horse contender, although he would face the same location problem.

How about the public sector? The RSC quickly said it was not interested. But back in August *The Guardian* called for the National Theatre to buy the Vic, its original home. Lord Cowrie, Arts Council chairman, declared himself "very much in favour" of this idea. Could the prompting of these two important institutions be resisted? Sad to say, the answer was yes. The National said a polite "no thanks".

True, the Vic would have provided it with a useful venue to park productions with the potential to "run and run". That is what it did with *The Wind in the Willows*. But again, location is the drawback: if the National has a commercial hit on its hands, it wants to transfer it into the West End proper.

What the National does crave is the Old Vic Annex: the production workshop round the back which currently houses the Studio, the National's vital "research and

development" arm. The Annex, my new estate agent friend assures me, could indeed be sold separately. But he points out that there is no guarantee that "17,000 square feet of prime space in Central London" would go to the National.

So what will happen? In the summer Sir Richard Eyre declared the Vic to be "a theatre that can't be run without a public subsidy". That isn't literally true. The Mirvishes have run it unsubsidised for 15 years, and had some commercial successes: *Carmen* Jones did two years of good business. Another Mirvish-like benefactor, who wants to own a large slice of theatre history could appear. Unfortunately, at present most wealthy arts patrons are already spoken for supplying the huge "matching funds" needed for London's many big lottery projects.

Is it impossible, though, to release lottery funds to help to buy the Vic, even at this late stage? I can think of few more deserving causes. Yes, the Vic is in the wrong place. But it is the cradle of the modern British theatre. It is a beautiful building, and for the past six months it has again been the jewel in the tiara of theatreland.

To contemplate it being turned into a bump'n'grind club is rather like imagining a multi-storey car park fitted under the dome of St Paul's. What is needed now is time. The Mirvishes, who have done so much to keep the Vic alive, could now do one last act of majestic kindness — by accepting not the highest bid, or indeed any bid at all, until those who think that they can make the Vic work as a rep theatre have had a chance to rouse their backers.

Meanwhile, our newly emboldened Culture Secretary should cut through the red tape that seems to stifle any imaginative lottery bid. That might just save one of the world's most enchanting theatres from a fate worse than death.

Rocky horror music show

The blood-spattered images of Hammer horror may be forever defined by Christopher Lee and the late Peter Cushing, but to devotees of film scores the bold motifs of James Bernard were just as important to the formula. From the company's first dabbles in vampires and gaudy in the 1950s, Bernard furnished the music for more than 20 films over the next quarter of a century.

Now aged 72, he returns to the realm of the undead on Monday at the London Film Festival, providing the score for a newly restored version of the German silent film, *Nosferatu*. The screening of F.W. Murnau's *Symphonie der Dämonen* (Symphony of Horror) marks the latest instalment of Channel 4's silent film restorations, a series which began so triumphantly in 1980 with Abel Gance's "lost" masterpiece, *Napoleon*.

As with previous Channel 4 projects supervised by the film historian Kevin Brownlow and his collaborator David Gill (who died this year), Bernard's score will receive the full orchestral treatment at the Festival Hall, where it will be played by the English Chamber Orchestra conducted by the gifted composer-orchestrator Nic Raine. Raine also conducted the album recording of the score for the Silva Screen label earlier this year.

The evening will commemorate two anniversaries: *Nosferatu* is 75 years old this year and, as all connoisseurs of bloodcurdling fiction will be aware, Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* was published exactly a hundred years ago.

Clive Davis on the composer still making a career out of Dracula at 72

Though the central character in Murnau's film is called Count Orlok, the parallels with the book were so blatant that Stoker's widow sued for compensation. Since the production company — which had not purchased the rights to the novel — was insolvent by this time, the film was ordered to be destroyed. Fortunately for posterity it never was; Max Schreck's eerie portrayal of the gaunt, rat-like vampire survived as a precursor to Bela Lugosi, Christopher Lee and all the other actors who have taken up residence in Count Dracula's coffin.

When it received its premiere in Berlin, *Nosferatu* was accompanied by an orchestral score by Hans Erdmann. Bernard's new version has been dogged by almost as many legal complications as was the original film. His commission originally came from a video company based in Texas, planning to issue its own restored print, it asked Silva Screen's permission to use extracts from Bernard's *Dracula* soundtracks.

The request was — understandably enough — turned down. Instead Bernard agreed to write an entirely new work. Working from a cassette in his flat off the King's Road, he began the laborious job of synchronising themes with timings, only to discover when he had completed the final bars that the Texans seemed to have vanished, leaving no trace except a recorded message at the other end of a telephone line.

Fortunately Brownlow's company, Photoplay, stepped in at this point to adopt the music for its own screening of *Nosferatu* — the fruits of a co-production between the Münchner Film museum and the Cineteca del Comune di Bologna.

It is the culmination of a period of renewed activity by Bernard, who wrote his last Hammer film score in 1974. Feeling that his career had reached a plateau, he then fulfilled a long-held ambition to move to Jamaica, and stayed there for a decade, returning to this country only after the death of his partner.

"I suppose it was a curious thing to have done, to have abandoned my career," he says. "But although I had written some quite lyrical and romantic pieces for other films, once I'd become known as a Hammer composer I think I just felt that I couldn't do anything else. It's like an actor who becomes typecast."

With the growing interest in film music as an art form, Bernard's music has been back in demand. His scores for Hammer productions such as *The Devil Rides Out*, *She* and, of course, the various *Dracula* films since been recorded by Silva Screen.

Nosferatu caps a decidedly off-beat career. After studying with Herbert Howells at the Royal College of Music, Ber-



He has worked with Benjamin Britten and won a screenwriting Oscar, but James Bernard is more than happy to be remembered for his film music

nard worked with Benjamin Britten — whom he had met some years earlier — and ended up copying out the vocal score for *Billy Budd* during a year spent commuting back and forth to Aldeburgh, prior to the opera's premiere.

After Britten encouraged him to strike out on his own, Bernard began composing for the BBC's Third Programme. One of the productions was *The Duchess of Malfi*, whose conductor, John Hollingsworth, also happened to have been appointed musical director at Hammer. When the composer who had been signed up for Hammer's *The Quatermass Experiment* fell ill, Hollingsworth suggested Bernard as a replacement. A fee of £100 set the young composer off on a new path.

For his first three films he was entrusted only with percussion and strings. By the time *The Curse of Frankenstein* came along in 1957, he was given a full orchestra. He must also be one of the very few composers to win an Oscar for something other than music. In 1951 he and his friend, the journalist Paul Dehn, devised the story for that tense A-bomb thriller *Seven Days To Noon*. There was no all-expenses-paid

junketing in Tinseltown; he recalls that their joint Oscars were delivered to them in London in a cardboard box.

The Oscar still stands on Bernard's mantelpiece, testimony to the unexpected twist of a life in film. At one point, filled with youthful ambition, he tried his hand at concert music, his output including a song cycle for Peter Pears that was performed at the Wigmore Hall. *The Times* gave an enthusiastic review. *The Daily Telegraph* was withering.

Disheartened, Bernard realised that his metier lay elsewhere — in theatre music, perhaps. Little did he know that Christopher Lee lay in wait, fangs bared.

"People now take so much interest in film music," he says. "You'd be surprised at how many letters I get even now, especially from America. I'm also told that my music particularly appeals to the young. That pleases me immensely, much more so than having a symphony or an overture played once at a Prom and then never performed again."

Nosferatu is at the Festival Hall (0171-960-6342) on Monday Nov 17 at 7.30pm

Down to busyness

THE prospect of not one but two concertos by Peter Maxwell Davies was, to judge by the embarrassing turnout at the Barbican on Tuesday night, too daunting for Royal Philharmonic regulars. They need not have worried: one of the concertos — that for piccolo, first heard last season — was dropped from the programme, leaving Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* and Elgar's *Overture to balance* Davies' Piano Concerto, receiving its London premiere.

The concerto was written for, and dedicated to, Kathryn Stott, and according to the composer "much of the piano writing is related exactly to how she plays". The rhythmic vivacity and dashing bravura that characterise the work are

NEW MUSIC

presumably what Davies is referring to here. There are quieter moments too, and Stott did probably as much as could be done to infuse them with lyrical warmth.

The overall impression is one of busyness, of scurrying fingerwork and precipitous figuration — rattled off fearlessly by Stott. But such hyperactivity is not always convincing. I look forward to hearing the work again, and perhaps registering more of the prolific detail with which it is endowed.

Texture, colour and rhythmic detail also loomed large in Davies' handling of the *Pastoral*. The endlessly repeated patterns that underpin the unfolding harmonic scheme in the first two movements were treated with respect, but it was not enough to counteract the blandness of the reading as a whole, or the impression of its execution. The end of the *Scherzo* passed for nothing, while the thunderstorm was a mere damp squib.

More successful was the *Egmont Overture*, which from the belligerent opening chords to the exhilarating coda had all the dramatic verve one could ask for.

BARRY MILLINGTON

EXCLUSIVE OFFER THE TIMES

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This week *The Times*, in association with the BBC Good Food Show, offers you the chance to buy a series of outstanding cookery books by celebrity chefs at up to £5 less than the cover price.

Today's choice is *At Home With Mary Berry* (£11.99 instead of £16.99). From easy family suppers to large parties, Mary Berry offers more than 150 new recipes for effortless entertaining.

Written for people who have little time to spend on complicated dishes, this collection of recipes uses simple and ready-prepared ingredients to create imaginative menus.

You can see her, and a host of celebrity chefs, demonstrating live at this year's BBC Good Food Show between November 26-30 at the NEC, Birmingham. To book tickets, call the show hotline on 0121 767 4000 quoting NTF for your Times discount. (Weekday £8.10, weekend £9.10).

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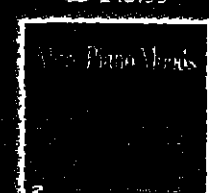
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Metal as anything

But the 1970s were not all sweetness and delight for Collins. He took the old saw about the 1960s — that if you remember them, you weren't there — and updated it a decade. "I remember going



DAVID SINCLAIR

1	(1)	Spiceworld	Spice Girls (Virgin)
2	(2)	Urban Hyznys	Verve (Hut)
3	(28)	Paint the Sky with Stars	Erya (WEA)
4	(3)	Grassroots Hills	Elsmal (EMI)
5	(4)	Castaways from Heaven Lighthouse Family	Mercury
6	(7)	White on Blonde	Texas (Mercury)
7	(5)	Lennon Legend	John Lennon (Parlophone)
8	(14)	Queen Rocks	Queen (Parlophone)
9	(8)	It's my Life	Sash! (Multiple)
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14, 1997

Metal as anything

POP ALBUMS

ALBUMS DA-14
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RACING

Dettori plans to reduce rides in fresh approach

BY CHRIS MCGRATH

FRANKIE DETTORI began the week by switching on the Christmas lights in Regent Street, which August duty had performed 12 months previously by the Spice Girls — a revealing measure of how the Italian jockey has embraced the world outside racing. Yesterday, however, a date round the corner in Putnam Square plunged him into uncharacteristic gloom.

Dettori, who could teach Father Christmas a thing or two about jollity, instead felt inclined to hunker after the Jockey Club gave him a 21-day ban, one week of which is suspended for six months. Its effects, however, seem certain to endure much longer.

For it prompted him into a soul-searching analysis of where his remarkable career is heading, and a revision of

months long. With the commitments he has in Dubai, and in November and December, you have to pace yourself or you don't get to the end. As they say, I've got the T-shirt. I've been there and done it. I've won the championship, been tearing round the country for almost three years, so I'm planning to be a little bit more selective. This year, I rode in 700 races, and it gave me some freshness.

"My owner pays the bill and expects me to be 100 per cent. I'm not going to ride seven days a day, 14 in summer. It's a precaution against suspension, against getting hurt in smaller races."

These sober reflections were prompted by a ban that requires him to miss the ride on Mons in the Japan Cup on November 23. For the sport's golden boy has been accumulating black marks while working the season's long treadmill, being referred to the disciplinary committee by the Newmarket stewards after a sixth riding offence on October 31. An audience in London is automatic for the next breach after passing a 15-day "trigger", and Dettori had already served 18 days for various misdemeanours before being found guilty of careless riding that day.

He would have bothered riding on the all-weather only to keep fit for Japan, so the committee took the decision to ban him worldwide for a fortnight from November 18, regardless of whether flat racing is scheduled in Britain. John Mase, the Jockey Club spokesman, said: "The committee did not want a hollow penalty, where he could have gone abroad to ride most weekends. His plans would have been affected."

"I am a little bit disappointed, because I thought it was going to cover only British racing days," Dettori added. "It's been an up-and-down year. Let's not forget, racing is a very competitive sport. When you go 40 miles an hour, you make a split-second decision and sometimes you make a slight error."

"Now the season is 12



Irish Stamp attempts to go one better this year in the Sporting Index Chase over Cheltenham's cross-country course

Indian Jockey can continue rise

CHETENHAM CHANNEL 4

2.25: Skilful placing by his trainer, Martin Pipe, rather disguised the continuing improvement of Indian Jockey until he proved a revelation when raised in class at Ascot last time. His only defeat in ten starts was over hurdles on his reappearance, and while this tough little horse is now giving weight away, rather than receiving it — he can shrug off a 6lb higher mark with another bold round of jumping in front.

Flying Instructor, among the best of a crop of novices of questionable quality last season, tends to need his first outing, while a combination of inexperience and possible lack of fitness counts against Call Equiname, who got jarred last autumn. Amlah steps out of novice grade. Time Won't Wait does not always find much and Mister Lord, who has been in good form after gaining some experience of fences during the summer, Adrian Maguire, the mount of Adrian Maguire, as the likeliest danger.

3.00: The previous chase winners have question marks over them and they face some interesting recruits. The Proms was a nerve-testing sight at Haydock, while the odds-on favourite left when Kilmington won at Kempton. Kendal Cavalier stays well, as he showed on his first start for a new yard at Chepstow.

3.35: A hair-raising spectacle. McGregor The Third, winner of the two previous runnings, is denied his chance of a treble after succumbing to a "runny nose" on the eve of the race. Irish Stamp, for one, will not be missing him, having been routed by 18 lengths when second last year. He is an old hand in this type of race, but was perhaps showing gratitude for a return to park fences when a fine second to Bertone at Ascot on his return. Marketplace was tailed off here last year, and a similar fate may befall his Czech travelling companions, but there are possibilities about the raiders from Ireland.

Fiftysevenchannels may not last home over this trip, but Bishop's Hall, has shown plenty of ability at various stages of his career — and there was evidence that he retains it when third at Tramore in the summer.

4.05: Northern Drums, a tubed son of Sadler's Wells, has picked up the strands of his early promise on the Flat since Martin Pipe acquired him as yet another bargain out of a seller. He has gone up 10lb for another easy handicap win at Stratford last time, but his trainer does not believe him done with yet. Either Northern Drums or Tintev must have their limitations exposed today, however, and there is every chance that the latter, a spectacular winner at Exeter, is likewise an improved horse for his new connections. Certainly, his jumping looks greatly improved compared to last year.

Exalted's form is as good as his big weight suggests, while at the other end of the scale, Country Minstrel appeared to run well on his reappearance, and may offer a glimmer of value. The only real danger to the two obvious improvers here, however, may be concealed among the Irish dark horses, with Orange Order the possible pick.

CHRIS MCGRATH

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1. THE BEATLES: 1.00
2. THE BEATLES: 1.00
3. THE BEATLES: 1.00
4. THE BEATLES: 1.00
5. THE BEATLES: 1.00
6. THE BEATLES: 1.00
7. THE BEATLES: 1.00
8. THE BEATLES: 1.00
9. THE BEATLES: 1.00
10. THE BEATLES: 1.00

1.00 Ask In Time, 2.00 Urban Lily, 2.35 Above, 3.10 Karieligh Boy, 3.45 Headwind, 4.15 Jiggins.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.30 BRAMBLE NOVICES HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (6 runners)

1. KEN BASK (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2. ABONCE (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10. ASH IN BOMB (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

2.00 SW RACING CLUB CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS

SELLING HURDLE (23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (7 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
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8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

2.35 CITY OF EXETER CHALLENGE BOWL HANDICAP

CHASE (23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (4 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

3.10 CITY OF EXETER HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (9 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

3.45 SOUTH WEST RACING CLUB HANDICAP

CHASE (23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

4.15 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

5.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

5.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

6.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

6.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

7.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

7.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

8.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

8.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

9.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

9.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

10.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

10.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

11.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

11.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

12.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

12.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

13.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

13.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

14.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

14.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

15.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

15.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

16.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

16.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

17.00 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
8.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
9.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
10.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

17.35 TARKIA HANDICAP HURDLE

(23.09.97, 2m 110yds) (8 runners)

1.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
2.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
3.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
4.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
5.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
6.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14
7.1212 DAMS (5) (5) M Pines 1-14

TENNIS

Rusedski's fine year draws to a sad close

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN HANOVER

THE extent of Greg Rusedski's hamstring injury became clear last night when the Briton heeded medical advice to withdraw from the ATP Tour world championship. Diagnosed as requiring a week's complete rest, Rusedski had little option but to default from his final round-robin match with Carlos Moyá. Victory in straight sets would have kept alive his faint hopes of reaching the semi-finals.

Instead, Rusedski was left to reflect on four days of misfortune in his inaugural appearance here. Although he will cash a qualifier's cheque for \$80,000 (about £50,000), he departs after two defeats in as many matches and, more pertinently, without having added any points to his world ranking. Yevgeny Kafelnikov, already through to the semi-finals yesterday after devouring Michael Chang 6-3, 6-0, has done enough to overhaul Rusedski. The Great Britain

ic. He was replaced in the red group by Thomas Muster.

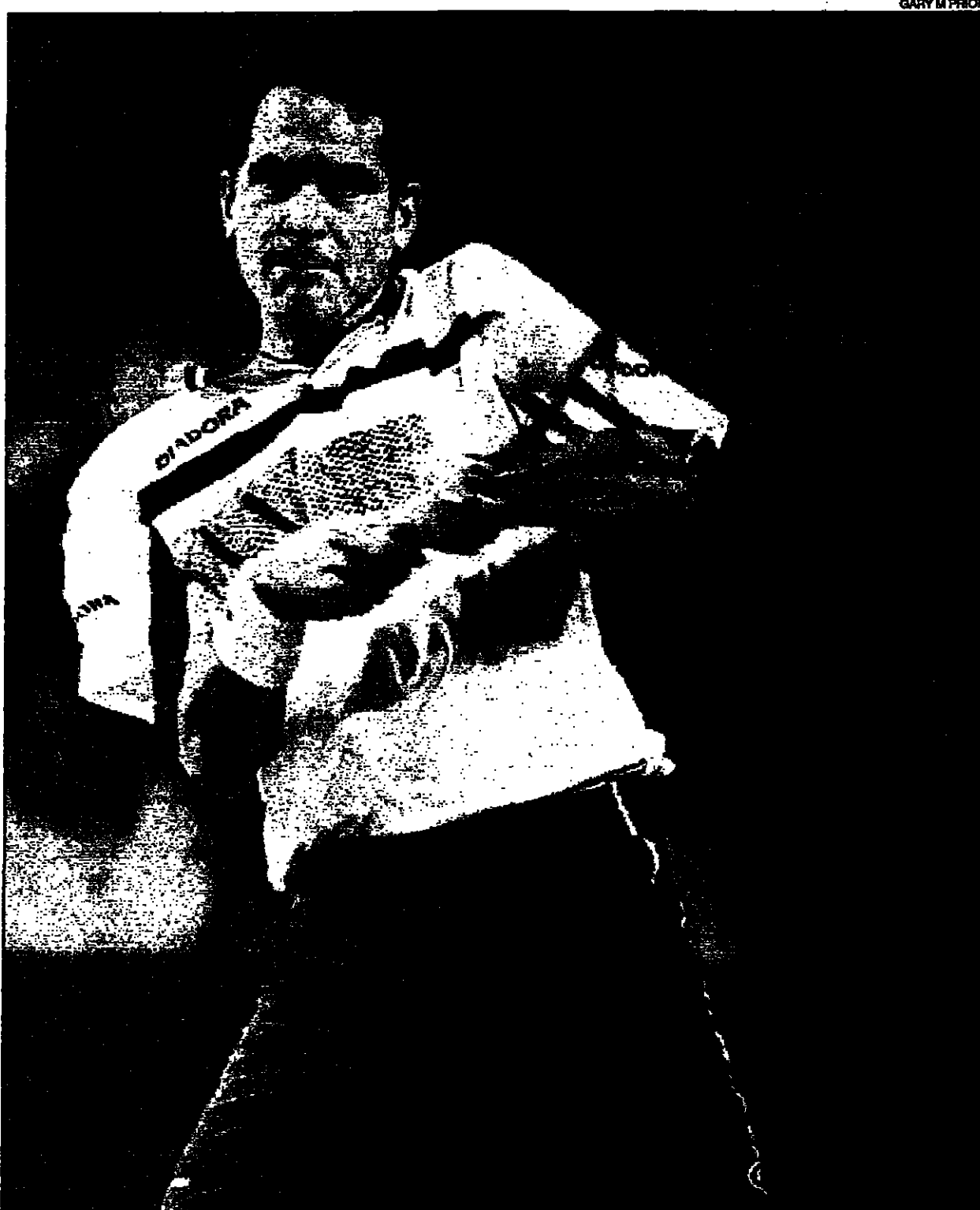
Two medical specialists recommended that Rusedski should take a week off, thus closing one of the most successful chapters in British tennis since the war. Rusedski won two tournaments and reached the final at the US Open, accruing a seasonal prize-money of \$1,515,473 (about £900,000). He rose to a career-high No 4 in the world and made the semi-finals in 11 of the 24 events he contested.

However, the effort has taken its toll. Doug Spreen, the ATP Tour trainer who examined Rusedski after his match with Sampras on Wednesday evening, said that the ailment "was common to people who had played a lot of tennis". He continued: "When a part of the body gets fatigued, you may have minor strains in that muscle. The symptoms you get are tightness and soreness. Greg has a slight spasm and a lot of tightness in that hamstring."

Spreen's words fuelled the belief that this end-of-season championship should be detached, by one week, from the end of the regular Tour. The scramble for places in this eight-man field went right to the wire, denying the successful participants any time to recharge.

Patrick Rafter alluded to the physical problems confronting players here when he said on the eve of the tournament: "I am sure everyone is nursing something, a certain injury. It's no secret among all the players [when] there is something wrong. But when you're out on the court and the adrenalin is running, you don't feel it."

As if to emphasise the point, Sergi Bruguera, himself engaged in the qualifying race to the "bitter end, virtually resigned" to withdrawing after exacerbating a rib injury in losing to Jonas Björkman yesterday. A standby replacement for the Spaniard in the white group — almost certainly his compatriot, Alex Corretja — was being sought last night. Meanwhile, Björkman plays Chang today to determine who joins Kafelnikov in the semi-finals.



Wilkinson concentrates as he plays a backhand on his way to victory over Milligan in the national championships

Mackin profits from masterclass

By ALIX RAMSAY

LEARNING can be a painful process, especially when it has to be done in public. Yesterday, Alan Mackin was neatly and ruthlessly beaten 6-0, 6-3 by Tim Henman in the second round of the Guardian Direct national championships at Telford in a match that was "epistemically described as a 'good' learning experience for the young man from Glasgow."

Not that Mackin seemed too unimpressed by the Henman masterclass. A spindly boy of 16, who still appears to be growing into his feet, he has encountered the British No 2 before. Mackin was one of the young hopefuls taken to Florida earlier this year for the first

of Jeremy Bates's tennis camps. There he practised and trained with Henman, played football with him in the quieter moments and came home mightily impressed.

"Tim is a great guy, he handles himself very well, he's confident, he never seems worried," Mackin said. Not that Henman had much to worry about in the first set as it whistled by in just 16 minutes. Henman had more trouble getting through the autograph hunters as he made his way off court.

"I struggled with the pace in the first set," Mackin said, "but I expected that to happen. I just got my head down and went for it more in the second set."

Henman was equally complimentary about his young opponent, praising the overall standard of his game. "He's got all the shots and a very good basis to work from," he said. "Once he settled into his game he started constructing some good points. That's what he has got to do now, point after point."

As for the long-term effect of such a drubbing, both men thought it would be a useful milestone in Mackin's career. The loser felt that he had learnt much in a very short space of time, while the victor basked back to his early days in Telford.

"I remember the first time I played Jeremy [Bates] and lost to him," Henman said. "It was a big occasion for me and

I learnt from it. It's important for Alan to learn to deal with situations like this. The higher he moves in the game the bigger occasions he will have to face."

Chris Wilkinson moved smoothly through, beating Luke Milligan 6-2, 6-2 in the third round.

The women moved towards their big occasion as the semi-final places were decided. Sam Smith moved purposefully past Claire Carter 6-4, 6-4 and today will play Lorna Woodroffe, who beat Lizzie Jelfs 3-6, 6-2, 6-4 after a slow start. Karen Cross, the No 2 seed, fell by the wayside, losing to Kate Warne-Holland 6-7, 7-5, 6-4.

Results, page 49

SPORT IN BRIEF

Swedish Match makes best of conditions

■ **SAILING:** With around 3,400 miles still to sail to Fremantle, *Swedish Match*, skippered by Gunnar Krantz, leads the second leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race across the Southern Ocean from *Innovation Kvaerner* by 190 miles. *Swedish Match* has passed 20 miles to the north of Prince Edward Island and is again enjoying the best racing conditions, with an average speed of 18.1 knots and bursts of up to 29 knots.

Behind the leaders, the mid-fleet battle remains remarkably close, with just 28 miles separating *Brunei Sunergy*, in fourth place, from *Chesley Racing*, in eighth. Still in among the pack is *Silk Cut*, skippered by Lawrie Smith. The Briton and his crew were in seventh position last night but with designs to recover fourth place at least.

Meeting of champions

■ **BOXING:** Lennox Lewis' mandatory World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight title defence against Zeljko Mavrovic, the European champion, was confirmed yesterday. Lewis must meet the German-based, London-trained Croatian before the end of July, the WBC ruled. Before then, Lewis will be aiming his sights much higher — at a unification match with Evander Holyfield, the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation champion, from the United States. Negotiations are taking place to try to make that meeting happen next year, possibly in April.

Curtis off as England lose

■ **FOOTBALL:** John Curtis, the Manchester United defender, was sent off for serious foul play in the ninety-minute minute as England lost the first leg of their European under-21 championship play-off with Greece at Iraklion, Crete, last night. Despite sustained pressure, England succeeded in keeping the Greeks out until the 78th minute, when Traianos Dellas put the home side in front. Nikos Liberopoulos then condemned England to an uphill struggle at Carrow Road in the second leg on December 17 by adding a last-minute penalty for a 2-0 final score.

Botham joins Cardiff

■ **RUGBY UNION:** Liam Botham, right, son of Ian, the former England cricket player, has joined Cardiff, the Welsh Cup holders, from West Hartlepool. The 20-year-old centre was signed after playing in two friendly matches for the club. Peter Manning, the Cardiff manager, said: "He has a good attitude and is a very determined, competitive person who wants to make it as a professional rugby player."



Pay dispute rumbles on

■ **CRICKET:** Players' representatives put a revised pay claim to the Australian Cricket Board yesterday as the dispute appeared set to continue. Tim May, president of the Australian Cricketers' Association, whose organisation represents about 120 professionals, and Mal Speed, the ACB chief executive, refused to give details of the new claim. Strike action remains a possibility.

Time to make a splash

■ **SWIMMING:** Graeme Smith and James Hickman, of Stockport, aim to put their disappointing summer behind them today when they start the new season at the Speedo British Grand Prix in Leicester. Smith, the Olympic bronze medal winner, drew a blank at the European Championships in Seville, while Hickman, the world short-course champion, had to pull out of the event because of illness.

SQUASH

Exhaustion takes grip on players

FROM COLIN MCQUILLAN IN KUALA LUMPUR

THE home nations were feeling the effects of the past 12 days as they entered the semi-final stage of the men's world team championship here. Following on so closely after the world open championship, this event has failed to inspire the players, some of whom have complained of being exhausted.

England, the No 1 seeds and defending champions, beat Finland 3-0 but appear to have lost the services of their second string, Peter Marshall, who seems to have failed to recover from his efforts in reaching the semi-finals of the world open after his recuperation from chronic fatigue syndrome. England will play Australia in the semi-finals today, while Egypt take on Canada.

Chris Walker, the England captain, said: "We are all beaten up in one way or another from last week's world open. This is the world team event and we are sleepwalking into the semi-finals."

Alex Gough, the first Welshman to reach a world open semi-final last week, has yet to win at first string for his country in the team event. Yesterday he lost to Derek Ryan, of Ireland, but Wales prevailed to stay in the play-offs for ninth place.

Ireland go in to the play-offs for thirteenth place alongside Scotland, who are led by Martin Heath since Peter Nicol flew home after his defeat in the final of the world open. Heath, however, has failed to recapture the winning form he showed in the opening rubber against Argentina, and suffered again yesterday as Scotland lost to New Zealand.

RUGBY UNION: NEW ZEALAND ARE ON A MISSION TO SPREAD THE WORD ACCORDING TO JOHN HART

Ireland will need divine intervention

IT WAS no coincidence that the Roman Catholic Church launched a campaign yesterday to attract recruits to the priesthood in Dublin to coincide with the arrival of the New Zealand rugby union party. The Church's vocational awareness programme is built around the theme of "Men in Black". Posters abound, asking "Who are the real men in black?" In a rugby sense, Ireland will find out tomorrow.

Priests mingled with players at the New Zealand press conference and Sean Fitzpatrick and Ian Jones posed happily for photographers. It was guaranteed exposure for the Church and showed commendable foresight by the Dublin diocese. Father Damian Farnon joked that the All Blacks would score the tries while the clergy would

The arrival of the All Blacks in Dublin yesterday attracted more than the usual sense of religious fervour, Mark Souster writes

attempt the conversions. The mood was far from black.

Not that the Irish public needs much converting. The religious fervour with which the New Zealanders have been greeted suggests that their aura is as strong as ever.

New Zealand are on a mission to take the game to a higher plane. John Hart, the coach, is helping to spread the rugby word with an evangelical zeal. With two of his disciples, Fitzpatrick, the injured captain, and Justin Marshall, his temporary replacement, Hart delivered a sermon, ranging from the First Test, to the state of the game worldwide and a call for a

global season. The present ten-month season was unsustainable, he said.

"The big challenge is to ensure that we don't let the quantity or the dollar dominate the decision-making," Hart said. "Certainly, the New Zealand Rugby Football Union has been very forthcoming in discussions to protect the game. Next year we have seven or eight tests, while this year we're playing 12."

"It is not the number of tests necessarily that will kill players, but the frequency. What we and England are undertaking this autumn is unsustainable. You need gaps between internationals. It is

crucial we get balance. That is one of the great challenges for the international board — to show vision and leadership regarding the structure of the international programme, to ensure we maintain quality and deliver a quality product."

"We have to have a global structure, harmonise the European Cup and Super-12 at provincial level, and the five nations' and the tri-nations' series at international level, with the winners playing each other. It means a radical shift in the season's structure. That is the challenge, rather than forcing more competitions on us."

As far as more immediate matters were concerned, Hart

said that he was pleased that his squad, which had left New Zealand amid some criticism, had begun the tour in fine form, but he stressed that Ireland would not be underestimated and that talk of a 100-point Irish defeat was insulting.

The decision to omit Josh Kronfield after 18 consecutive tests had been hard, but the Otago open side had looked rusty after a six-week absence because of injury. He has been replaced by Andrew Blowers.

Hart said Jonah Lomu might challenge for an international spot later in the tour, but cautioned: "Jonah is not quite ready yet and there is no way we are rushing him."

Even without Lomu, one is left feeling that Ireland will still need a miracle to defeat the All Blacks.

HOCKEY: BUSY WEEKEND OF LEAGUE AND EHA CUP MATCHES WILL TEST THE METTLE OF MEN AND WOMEN

England players return to bolster their clubs' hopes

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

TEDDINGTON and Reading, winners and runners-up respectively in the men's EHA Cup last season, will be fighting for survival in the fourth round on Sunday.

Teddington visit Southgate for what promises to be the showpiece of the day. When the teams met in the league at Trent Park last month, Southgate won 7-2 but Teddington were without six leading players. Their outlook is sharper and their confidence has been restored by the return from injury of Hauck to the front line.

Southgate are at full strength with Waugh, the defender, and Woods and Simons, both forwards, back from England's successful trip to Cairo. East Grinstead take on Reading at Saint Hill in another meeting of premier division clubs. Stuart Head,

despite his back trouble, is expected to play for East Grinstead, whose front line will again depend on Bhatti and Gibson. Their firepower will be matched by Pearn and Ashdown.

Cannock, at home to Harlestone Magpies, welcome back Kalbir Takhier, the former England centre half, after an ankle injury. Much interest will be focused on Mayer, Humphrey and Crutchley, all Cannock players, who combined for England's opening goal against Egypt after only eight seconds last Sunday.

Owen Jones, Williamson and Bolland have recovered from injury for Hounslow's home match against Surbiton, who are still without the injured Elmet and Constable.

In premier division matches tomorrow, Cannock travel to East Grinstead, and Southgate visit bottom-of-the-table Guildford.

Sutton Coldfield clarify priorities for the season

By CATHY HARRIS

RETAINING their place in the Premiership is more important to Sutton Coldfield than winning the women's EHA Cup. Jane Sixsmith, the captain, said yesterday. Sixsmith readily admits that her team have under-achieved in the league and stressed that after a shaky start to this season their main objective is to remain in the top flight.

Sutton Coldfield face Ipswich, lying second behind Slough, in the league tomorrow and again in a third-round cup tie on Sunday.

The England and Great Britain striker said: "We had a good spell about six years ago and used to be talked about as contenders for the title. Now, nobody mentions us. It's a tough double-header, but a good run in the league is far more important than the

cup, although we'd obviously love to go through to the next round." With only eight teams in the league, there is little margin for error. "There's no way any team can challenge Slough," Sixsmith said. "We may as well have a trophy for the rest."

Sutton Coldfield's task will be helped by the absence of four Ipswich players tomorrow. Lucy Youngs, the captain, and Colleen Adcock are injured, and Debbie Rawlinson and Kirsten Spencer are unavailable because of business commitments. However, Rawlinson and Spencer will return on Sunday.

Doncaster, who face Clifton, are bottom of the table, like the local football club — Doncaster Town, in the Nationwide League third division — and Ray Allen, the manager, said: "There's no gloomy talk here, but we definitely need a much-improved team performance against Clifton."

SNOOKER

Blair asked to lift sponsorship threat

By PHIL YATES

TONY BLAIR and William Hague have been invited to the Liverpool Victoria United Kingdom Championship as the governing body intensifies its battle to retain tobacco sponsorship.

Jim MacKenzie, the chief executive of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA), is pressing for talks with the Prime Minister at the earliest possible date after Mr Blair declared, during Prime Minister's Questions on Wednesday, that he was willing to attend such a meeting.

MacKenzie believes that the controversial exemption received by Formula One from the proposed tobacco sponsorship ban has indirectly strengthened the case for snooker enjoying similar concessions.

In a letter to Tessa Jowell, the Public Health Minister, MacKenzie said: "It is grossly unfair that the strength of the powerful lobby should prevail over the reasoned argument of less well-funded sports."

"Without tobacco sponsorship there would be fewer competitions televised. Without exposure on television, participation will drop dramatically. That will have an immediate impact upon the thousands of dedicated snooker clubs within the UK and on those companies who supply products and services into the industry."

MacKenzie also said that if, in future, Embassy or indeed any other tobacco company, were prevented from sponsoring the world championship — which next year will boast a record prize-fund of £1.32 million — it could force the event to be staged elsewhere.

The world championship is totally sponsored by tobacco

and in the absence of that continuing support we may have to submit to pressure to stage it overseas where tobacco restrictions are more relaxed," MacKenzie said, adding: "The UK viewing figures for a major tournament can reach ten million, substantially more than motor racing."

The one issue beyond debate is that snooker would be badly damaged by tobacco sponsorship becoming illegal. Ignoring ancillary income, including that from television, tobacco will provide £2.6 mil-



Ebdon: young opponent

lion of total prize-money of £4.9 million this season.

David Gray, 18, will provide youthful opposition for Peter Ebdon in the second round of the UK championship after recovering from 3-0 down to beat Graeme Dott, of Scotland, 6-5 at Preston Guild Hall yesterday. Jamie Burnett, who beat Stephen Hendry in the Grand Prix last month, also advanced with a comfortable 6-1 victory over Craig MacGillivray, while Jon Birch, of Middlesbrough, had breaks of 83 and 88 during a 6-0 whitewash of Mark Gray.

FOOTBALL

Given and Ireland hope to put the jokes behind them

FROM RUSSELL KEMPSON IN BRUSSELS

WITH so much stake when Ireland take on Belgium tomorrow night for a place in the World Cup finals, it is as well the frivolity should be disposed of first. When the Ireland party arrived in the Belgian capital yesterday, serious questions were being asked but few were answered. Instead, matters ranged from peripheral to the absurd.

Mick McCarthy, the Ireland manager, is rarely given to overt displays of humour. A very grin is as much as he can usually muster. Yet even he chuckled when it was pointed out that he bore an uncanny resemblance to the late King Baudouin of Belgium.

"Look at the face on the 20-franc coin," he was urged. McCarthy laughed. "I just hope he is a good-looking fella," he replied.

That Ireland play the second leg of their qualifying play-off in the King Baudouin Stadium is seen as a lucky omen by the Ireland support-

ers, who will clutch at anything as a sign that a third successive appearance in the World Cup finals is nigh. Many of the anticipated 9,000-strong following have begun to drift in from Dublin. They should be well catered for in a city that includes O'Reilly's, O'Neill's and Kinty O'Shea's among its multitude of watering holes.

Local authorities have given warning that there are no tickets available for purchase, by away fans, but this has not stopped some of the more intemperate among the 8,000 Irish from having a go. "They have used every dodge possible," John McNeena, the manager of the Wild Geese bar, said. "You'd be amazed how many Van der Murphys and Van der Kells are now living here. All second-generation Irish of course, with Belgian mothers." Apparently, nobody has yet tried Hertz van Rental.

Ahead of the serious stuff,

the players have had their moments too. Tony Cascarino, the AS Nancy striker, reflected on how a passport-thefting pickpocket had caused him untold grief as he tried to make his French connection at Charles de Gaulle airport.

Shay Given, the Newcastle United goalkeeper, admitted to feeling like a pantomime star after his blunder in the FA Cup. Carling Premiership match against Coventry City last weekend, when Dion Dublin nipped in from behind, dispossessed him and scored. Given's Ireland teammates - "He's behind you, Shay, he's behind you" - have not let him forget it.

"This probably means I will appear on every 'What happened next?' sequence for the rest of my life," Given said. "It was totally my fault, it was my mistake and I will have to live with it. I suppose even I can see the funny side of it now."

Amid the frumpy though, the tension is not far from the surface. McCarthy's mood later changed from one of geniality to tetchiness, especially when it was suggested that Belgium had had enough chances to have secured more than the 1-1 draw in the first leg at Lansdowne Road last month. "I am not having that," he said, rounding on the interviewer who had clearly watched a different game.

When a Belgian pressman mentioned the threat of Luc Nilis, the PSV Eindhoven striker, McCarthy regained his jovial thread. Asked if Given was having nightmares about Nilis, having twice conceded goals to him while playing for club and country during the past fortnight, McCarthy said: "I don't know. I don't sleep with Shay."

It is no more than a mask, guaranteed to disguise the magnitude of the task ahead, yet a few salient facts did eventually filter through. Ray Houghton is fit and should play; Terry Phelan is not and will not. Lee Carsley is likely to man-mark Nilis; Cascarino might play alone up front. It is a guessing game, all good fun again, but it cannot last.



Andy Cole and Steve Watson, preparing for England's match against Cameroon at Wembley tomorrow, share a joke during training yesterday. Oliver Holt, page 52

Poor review delights Scots

BY KEVIN MCCARRA

THE Scotland football team are among the few performers who will ever cherish a bad review. The criticisms came from Zinedine Zidane, the most glamorous member of a France side that scrambled a 2-1 victory over Craig Brown's men in Saint-Etienne on Wednesday.

He spoke with the frustration of a sportsman who knew that his talent had been all but nullified. "Scotland didn't play at all," he said. "All they did was get men behind the ball. This wasn't a competitive match and it was a real shame that they didn't try to make it a bit more entertaining."

Brown, the Scotland manager, thought that Zidane's complaint should be treated as a glowing testimonial to Billy McKinnay, who closed the Frenchman out of the game for long spells. There was absurdity, too, in hearing a person who works in Serie A profess himself against the idea of close marking.

Zidane, of Juventus, demeaned himself with the silly complaint that Scotland had been uncooperative. His countrymen were unsympathetic, having booed France from the field in the Geoffroy Guichard Stadium. Zidane's team did take the lead, through Pierre Leigle, but Scotland equalised a few seconds later when a move of rapid passes ended with Gordon Durie's emphatic finish.

France's winner, in the 77th minute, was a penalty converted by Youri Djorkaeff, a substitute, after Leigle had been fouled by Craig Burley. By then, Durie had missed two fine chances for a Scotland side that devised better opportunities than opponents whose style was convoluted and ineffective. The visitors had only the result to regret.

"When it was 1-1 at half-time we told the players in the dressing-room that we didn't

want them coming back in with a hard-luck story, but in the end that was exactly what happened," Brown said. The manager's words achieved a fine balance between sympathy and exasperation, because he knows that Scotland were capable of a better result.

He was pleased by the performance in central defence of David Weir and glad to give Matt Elliott, of Leicester City, the debut, as a substitute, that ties him to Scotland. Nonetheless, the pragmatic satisfaction did not prevent Brown from being rueful over the lingering deference of his team.

He believes that Scotland began poorly because they were hindered by regard for the reputations of the French players. The failure to snatch any of the opportunities in the second half may also have stemmed from inhibition. Defeated though they were, Scotland learnt that they ought to acquire some arrogance.

Morris refuses to let isolation cramp his style



It is easy to think of King's Lynn as a footballing backwater. Out on the western edge of Norfolk where the Great Ouse runs into The Wash, it is so far off the beaten track that some of their players face round trips of 200 miles and more just for the home games.

Some backwaters run deep, however. Behind the rustic facade lies a proud FA Cup tradition that they are hoping to revive when they face Bromsgrove Rovers in the first round proper tomorrow.

That they have got this far is a triumph in itself. Three years ago, the East Anglian outpost was in danger of disappearing altogether. The club was more than £30,000 in debt and the capacity of the main stand was less because it did not conform to safety standards.

"We were within hours of closing down completely," John Scates, a local businessman, said as he recalled how he became chairman "almost by mistake". A new company was formed, there was a share issue among the directors and the few supporters. King's Lynn Borough council helped with the safety work and granted a new 20-year lease - and the club, formed in 1879, was saved.

Scales played what he calls his "masterstroke" by appointing Peter Morris, a middle-aged player for Mansfield Town, Ipswich Town and Norwich City, as manager, and the club has not looked back.

In his first season, King's Lynn were promoted from the midland division of the Dr Martens League. Last

Tony Sparrow, 33, a central defender who has played for Norwich, Leicester City, Plymouth Argyle and Peterborough, is far and away the most experienced at 33; the rest, who have dropped out of the Football League to take jobs ranging from postman to turkey farmer, have an average age of 22.

Morris does not work them too hard because of the travelling they have to do - "you don't want to leave their legs in the car," he said - as they prepare to extend a tradition of Cup success, the peak of which came in 1961-62 when they got to the third round before losing 4-0 to Everton in front of a crowd of almost 45,000 at Goodison Park.

For the moment, however, victory over Bromsgrove, in front of a capacity crowd of 3,000 at The Walks, will be enough to let everyone know that they are still on the football map.

Morris experienced PAT GIBSON

Atkinson's folly is in the past, fans claim

BY JOHN GOODBODY

RON ATKINSON will be confirmed as the manager of Sheffield Wednesday today, and the club's supporters appear to have agreed to forgive and forget abusing him as a "Judas" when he walked out of Hillsborough six years ago to join Aston Villa.

Rita Nettleship, the secretary of the Wednesday supporters' club, said yesterday that it was a "positive step" to appoint Atkinson. "Most fans will welcome him back," she said.

When Atkinson returned to Hillsborough with Villa during the 1991-92 season, he had to be given police protection.

Atkinson succeeds David Pleat and the League Managers' Association (LMA) said yesterday that it wanted to redefine the role of a manager after recent sackings. Over-

seas clubs are being surveyed by the LMA as it attempts to find ways of easing the pressure of financial affairs.

Harry Redknapp, the West Ham United manager, has abandoned an attempt to sign Giuseppe Signori, of Lazio, on loan because the player's wage demands were too high.

Redknapp had hoped to secure the 31-year-old striker until the end of the season, but was foiled by his terms - believed to be £800,000. Swansea City were in disarray on the eve of their FA Cup first-round tie against Peterborough United at the Vetch Field tonight. Eight first-team players who have been transferred by Alan Cork, the manager, want talks with Steve Hamer, the chairman of the Nationwide League third division side, to express their anger at Cork's actions.

ne to make a splash

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

In the last couple of Refreshers I have discussing game tries after an opening of One of Major has been raised to Two. Today I look at the situation when partner has raised responder's suit, in a sequence like this: 1♠-1♥-2♥.

If responder's hand is balanced the sequence is parallel to that of an opening One No-Trump. If you would make a game try if partner had opened a weak no-trump, then you should make a try after 1♠-1♥-2♥.

When the hand is more distributional such a straightforward rule is not possible. Tony Forrester in his book *Secrets of Success* introduces a Rule of 19 to help you decide. What you should do is add your point count to the combined length of your two longest suits. If the total is 19 the hand is probably worth a game try, otherwise it is not. After the sequence: 1♠-1♥-2♥, the following hands are worth a game try:

- (1) ♠K5 ♥AQ1097 ♦J973 ♣82
- (2) ♠Q107 ♥K10843 ♦Q92 ♣A4
- (3) ♠J5 ♥KQ432 ♦K9 ♣Q432
- (4) ♠AK43 ♥Q86432 ♦2 ♣83

These hands are worth tries of Three Diamonds, Two No-Trumps, Three Clubs and Two Spades respectively, and indeed many players who had not heard of the Rule of 19 would make those bids.

But the following hand:

- (5) ♠Q5 ♥Q8432 ♦Q645 ♣KJ

should give up because (a) its intermediates are terrible, (b) it has no ace and (c) it has no singleton.

Forrester recommends a further adjustment according to the degree of fit for the suit partner opened. He suggests deducting a point when holding a singleton in partner's suit and adding a point with three cards or more.

The rules for partner's acceptance of the Trial Bid are the same as we have seen before. With a maximum you should always accept unless you have a really dreadful holding in the trial suit. Otherwise you need some plus feature, either in terms of controls or trump length/strength of your own or in terms of useful cards in partner's help suit. If you have only three-card support, no fitting honours in his help suit and less than a maximum in high cards then you should sign off.

□ Tony Forrester's *Secrets of Success* is available from all good bookshops or direct from the publisher, B.T. Batsford, on 01376 321276, price £9.99 (plus £1 p&p).

□ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

By Philip Howard

- OCOTILLO**
a. A dance
b. A spiny shrub
c. A person of mixed race
- RASS**
a. Carnabris
b. Seaweed
c. The bottom

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Britain's Best

Although Nigel Short held his own, scoring 50%, on top board for England in the recently concluded World Team Championship, some believe that both Michael Adams and Matthew Sadler, the co-British champions, will soon be challenging for the top spot in the UK rankings. Already, they have inched slightly ahead of Short in the most recent World Chess Federation rating list.

Michael Adams is a rare example of a young player whose preferences are more or less entirely strategic. He has an extraordinarily fine feel for the slightest positional edge, and rarely takes risks unless he has to. His ability to squeeze out a win for a minute endgame advantage is well established as a hallmark of his style. Today's game, after some middlegame complications, witnesses a finely honed endgame performance in which his passed pawn, ultimately proves decisive.

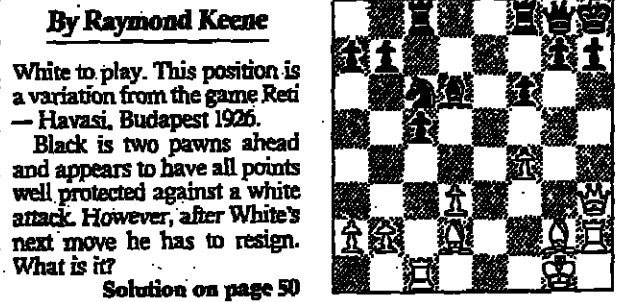
White: Maia Chiburdanidze
Black: Michael Adams
World Team Championship, Lucerne 1997

- NISSAN-Indian Defence**
- d4 Nf6
 - c4 e6
 - Nc3 Bb4
 - e3 b5
 - Nge2 Ne4
 - Bd2 Nd2
 - Qxd2 0-0
 - Nf4 d5
 - Qc2 Nd7
 - Bc3 h6
 - Ba2 Rb8
 - Nb5 Nf6
 - Nax7 Nax4

White to play. This position is a variation from the game Reti - Havasi, Budapest 1926.

Black is two pawns ahead and appears to have all points well protected against a white attack. However, after White's next move he has to resign. What is it?

Solution on page 50



FOR THE RECORD

FOOTBALL	
European under-21 championship	Qualifying play-off
First leg	(1) 2 ENGLAND 121 (1) 0
GREY	(1) 2 ENGLAND 121 (1) 0
Second leg	(1) 2 ENGLAND 121 (1) 0
Wendover's late header: France 2 Scotland 1 (at Saint-Etienne)	
FA TROPHY: Second qualifying round	Doncaster Rovers 2-1 Grimsby Town
INTERNATIONAL MATCH: France 2 Scotland 1 (at Saint-Etienne)	
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: First round, second leg: Solihull Borough 3-1 Paget Rangers	
UNION LEAGUE: First division: Doncaster Rovers 2-1 Grimsby Town	
RYMANS LEAGUE: Second division: Doncaster Rovers 2-1 Grimsby Town	
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Cheltenham Town 2-1 Stroud Town	
PONTNIA LEAGUE: Premier division: Aston Villa 2-1 Birmingham City	
WINSTONLEIGH LEAGUE: First division: Doncaster Rovers 2-1 Grimsby Town	
UNION LEAGUE: First division: Doncaster Rovers 2-1 Grimsby Town	
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RACING 47

Suspension forces
Dettori to
miss Japan Cup

SPORT

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 14 1997

TENNIS 48

Rusedski limps out
of Hanover
with hamstring injury



England's wayward star may leave Britain after World Cup

Gascoigne plans final farewell

By OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

PAUL GASCOIGNE, who has combined being one of the finest English players of his generation with a more lurid role as a walking national soap opera, gave the first hint yesterday that he may retire from top-level club football after the World Cup finals in France next summer to escape from the media attention that dogs his every move.

Gascoigne, who burst into the public consciousness with a series of outstanding performances during England's run to the World Cup semi-finals in Italy seven years ago, said that he was considering ending his career in British football after the finals next year and winding down his playing days in the United States.

Even though he will still have two years left on his contract with Rangers, he said that he had been assured by David Murray, the club chairman, and Walter Smith, the manager, that they would not stand in his way. He

Irish in good heart 49
French white 49
Morris men 49

mentioned the possibility of playing in Japan, but it is Major League Soccer in the United States that appeals to him.

Gascoigne, 30, said he would make his decision after England's involvement in the World Cup next summer is over. If he felt that he could still make a contribution to Rangers and play some part in England's qualifying campaign for the European championship in Belgium and Holland in 2000, he said, then he might see out his contract in Scotland.

He seemed relaxed and happy, but made it plain that he is growing ever more weary of the constant intrusion into his private life. It was obvious that he was not making threats so that people would try to dissuade him. The idea of an environment where he can appear larger than life and not be pilloried for it is exerting a strong hold.



Gascoigne takes time out during training with England yesterday to consider his future after the World Cup finals in France next summer

As the England squad prepared at Bisham Abbey for the international against Cameroon tomorrow, Gascoigne said: "I see myself ending my career in Britain with Rangers."

"I have still got two years on my contract after the World Cup, but if I do feel I need to leave Rangers it will not be for another club in Britain. If I leave, it will be abroad, not for a last challenge but a break

from all the pressure. I like the idea of America. Once you are famous there, you are famous for the rest of your life and they adore you for the rest of your life. I love it there - and they do great pizza coladas."

Gascoigne, who is almost certain to play against Cameroon, said that he had been "unbalanced" by the recent transfer speculation over a move to either Aston Villa or Crystal Palace that had raged around him. He said that he had spoken to Murray and Smith and they had told him that if he wanted to go, they would try to facilitate the move for him.

"They said that if I was

unhappy, they would do everything possible to help me," Gascoigne said. "I just said: 'No I want to do everything possible for Rangers and England.' After that, I will speak to Glenn Hoddle, Walter Smith and Terry Venables and take their advice. If I feel I might be able to help Rangers any more, I might stay and I will have to take England into consideration."

"I have not got any problems about playing anywhere in the world. If I want to enjoy the last few years of my career abroad, then I will do that - but it will definitely be after the World Cup. If I feel I have had enough, then I will just up

and go. My ambition at the moment is to win everything for Rangers, give them 100 per cent, get in the World Cup squad and then take it from there and consider my next option."

"This is my last chance at a World Cup, without a doubt. I don't think I have done too badly considering the injuries I have had, but I want to go out on a high. I want to be regarded as one of the best in the world, one of the top men. I have not got anything to prove. There won't be a £15 million move waiting for me around the corner, so I can just relax and enjoy myself at the very top."

Hoddle, the England coach, confirmed that Gascoigne was guaranteed a place in his final 22-man squad for France, providing that he maintained his recent impressive form. "Playing like he is playing," Hoddle said, "there is no better midfielder in the country."

"I am seeing a little bit of maturity from him now. He is realising that there is a team situation. It is not just what he can do. That is where the penny is dropping."

Would Hoddle consider picking someone who was playing in the United States? "I will answer that if anyone goes there," he said.

De Glanville back to face Australians

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE withdrawal of Alex King from the England team to play Australia at Twickenham tomorrow will give Phil de Glanville an unexpected opportunity to shrug off memories of the last meeting between the countries. The Bath centre steps up from the replacements because his club colleague, Mike Catt, moves across to replace the unfortunate King at fly half.

Four months ago, de Glanville, as England captain, led his side into the contest for the inaugural Cook Cup in Sydney. England lost by four tries to nil, de Glanville was below par and, this season, lost not only the captaincy to Lawrence Dallaglio but his place in the side. Now he has the chance of redemption in a back division containing three other Bath players.

King, however, must go through the disappointment of watching from the sidelines after being given an early opportunity to stake his claims to the No 10 jersey. Words of reassurance from the team management, that his chance will come again and quickly, will mean nothing for the moment, though his decision to withdraw yesterday morning reflects credit on the young Wasps fly half.

Three weeks ago he required keyhole surgery to a damaged knee. He played through the Heineken Cup quarter-final against Brive on Sunday despite twice requiring attention, and was optimistic that the knee would hold up for the international. "But when I woke up I felt that it was not yet 100 per cent," King, who has put the injury through intensive training, said.

King, a replacement before Christmas last season, was demonstrably disappointed last March when Jack Rowell, then the England coach, called up Rob Andrew for bench duty against Wales. He was capped as a replacement in the second meeting with Argentina in Buenos Aires in June but Australia would have been his first start in an international. "This is probably the biggest disappointment of them all but life goes on and I'll be back," King said.

Paul Grayson, the Northampton fly half, has been added to the replacements but King's withdrawal leaves a heavy goalkicking burden on Catt; Grayson, after all, has

conceded the kicking duties at Franklin's Gardens in recent weeks to Matt Dawson. However, now that David Alfred has been taken on full-time to help to coach England, his specialist kicking skills will benefit all the backs, among them Matt Perry, who would be the back-up if Catt was out of sorts.

All being well, King's chance will come against New Zealand or South Africa during England's intensive pre-Christmas programme. Until then, Catt, playing in his club position rather than centre, will keep the place warm. Seven of his 23 caps have been at fly half and he made five appearances there for the British Isles during the summer, including the final international against South Africa in Johannesburg.

To that extent it is not a



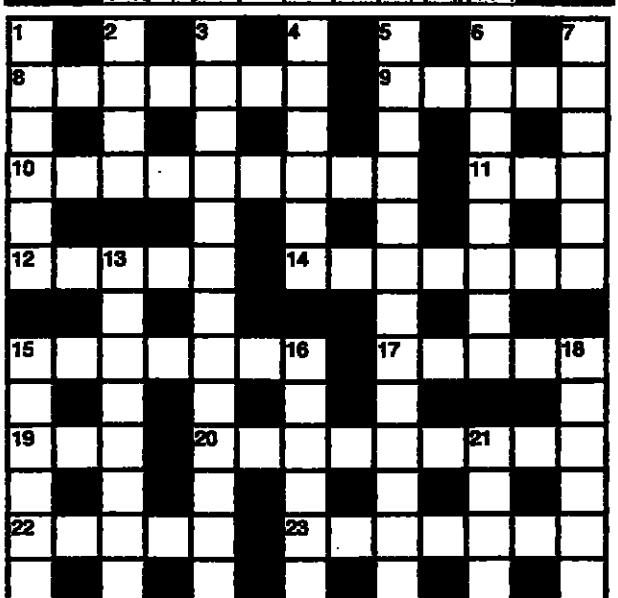
De Glanville back

significant disruption, although Clive Woodward, the coach, will regret not having an early opportunity to see King display his wares. "Alex is certainly a bigger man than I was a year ago against Argentina," Catt, who took a chest injury into that game (and subsequently lost his place), said.

Meanwhile, de Glanville can put the record straight. "That game [in Sydney] was the lowest point of my five years in international rugby," he said, reflecting on a match in which two missed tackles led directly to Australian tries in a 25-6 defeat. "I have felt a lot more relaxed this season - maybe it is a case of not taking things too seriously - and I have started to enjoy my rugby again."

Men in black, page 48

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1251

- ACROSS
- 8 Fish exhibitions (7)
 - 9 Eng. county; Devereux earldom (5)
 - 10 Murderer; a razor (9)
 - 11 Son-in-law of the Prophet (5)
 - 12 Mass [of insects] climb (up) (5)
 - 14 Foot lever (7)
 - 15 Astronom. calendar (7)
 - 17 Trial panellist (3)
 - 19 Trick study (3)
 - 20 Unwilling (9)
 - 22 Inserted map, page; teacher training day (5)
 - 23 Frozen block in drink (3,4)
- DOWN
- 1 Faction; sort of race (Alice) (6)
 - 2 Upset, wound (4)
 - 3 Gk. abbot; radiance, mirth (anag.) (13)
 - 4 A seasoned stew (6)
 - 5 Biker's accessory (7,6); fish, larva (13)
 - 6 One from egg Man (8)
 - 7 Cease to be valid (6)
 - 13 Rebuke (8)
 - 15 N polar region (6)
 - 16 Town lying in Mary's heart (6)
 - 18 For preference (6)
 - 21 Shivering fit (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1250
ACROSS: 1 Muff 3 Las Vegas 8 Deed 9 Prolific 11 In full view 14 Holmes 15 Cattle 17 Rebellious 20 Official 21 Pisa 22 Morality 23 Dyke
DOWN: 1 Midnight 2 Free fall 4 Arrive 5 Vulnerable 6 Gift 7 Sack 10 Blue pencil 12 Atrocity 13 Persuade 16 Depart 18 Foam 19 Afar

Horton's seniors confronting full force of European girl power

John Hopkins previews the latest team event squeezed into the golfing calendar

THE Ryder Cup has a lot to answer for. Although the excitement it has generated in recent years has made it one of the most enthralling team events in any sport, it has also spawned a series of lookalike competitions that come fizzing off the copying machine every couple of years.

The first was the Solheim Cup, named after Karsten Solheim, the man who invented the Ping putter. It is contested every two years by the women professional golfers of the United States and Europe.

Though Europe predictably lost the first encounter at Lake Nona, Florida, in 1990, the success of the biennial event was assured when, led by a rampant Laura Davies, they unexpectedly triumphed in Edinburgh in 1992.

The next competition to be dreamt up was the Presidents Cup, conceived as a means of giving many of the world's best players from outside Europe, men like Ernie Els, Nick Price, Greg Norman, Vijay Singh and Jumbo Ozaki, a chance to compete against the leading US professionals in a matchplay format. The Presidents Cup also

enables the Americans to have matchplay practice in the year in which they are not playing in the Ryder Cup. Happily, it is devoid of the jarring sound of a sponsor's name in the title. Naming the event in honour of the head of state meant that the US Tour could invite Gerald Ford, a former president, to serve as honorary chairman for the first match. In 1994, George Bush acted in the same capacity for

the second match, which was held in September last year.

Now the marketing men have come up with another team event, which starts today. This one is the European Cup, a three-day match between ten women professionals and ten men drawn from the ranks of the European Seniors' Tour. Marie-Laure de Lorenzi will captain the women's team, which contains five players who have competed in the Solheim Cup, including the estimable Alison Nicholas, the US Open champion and Europe's No 1 while Tommy Horton leads the over-50s.

The format is five four-somes today, five four-balls tomorrow and ten singles on Sunday. The venue, Praia D'El Rey, an hour north of Lisbon, is on what is known as the Silver Coast, an area, according to the publicity, that has been influenced by the Phoenicians, Romans, Celts and Arabs, although not necessarily in that order.

In other words, the inaugural European Cup is a com-



Nicholas: Europe's best

TOMORROW IN THE TIMES: UNDER THE SKIN OF SPORT

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PLUS Simon Barnes and Danny Baker

Oliver Holt meets Michael Owen

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